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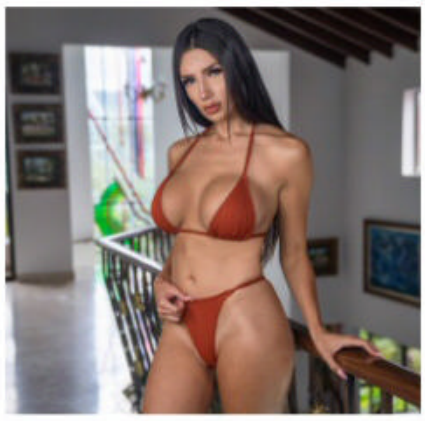

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TIPS & IDEAS

TO SPICE UP YOUR HOME DECOR

It's easy to rent/own a home or apartment, but how you decorate it, will make all the difference on whether it gives off that 'cool' factor or not. It can also be the make it or break it point to whether or not your guest(s) want to stay over and visit.

Whether it is the entire home or just the man cave, Norm Lanier, the popular Chief Creative Officer and founder behind Lone Star Art has been on the creative front of creating many of the sign designs you see in people's places, and he spoke to FHM exclusively about today's society with humor, and his top tips and ideas to spice up whatever space you are seeking something for.

Tell us Norm, why does the world need more humor these days? Michael J Fox once said, "I think the scariest person in the world is the person with no sense of humor." It seems to me that in the past few years, everyone has gotten so serious. Humor is the relief valve for a lot of pressure. Laughing makes us feel better and nothing is better than a shared laugh when you give someone that perfect funny gift.

When it comes to your sign and fun designs, which are some of your favorites? Our personalized dog signs are some of my favorites. We created over 200 cartoon dog breeds in all different colors that allow dog owners to create personalized signs with their family dogs taking center stage. It's a great unique gift. We have a huge selection of signs that are great for guys. Funny drinking signs are always a favorite. They're perfect for man caves, home bars and weekend places.

What are your Top 5 Home Decor Tips for "spicing up" a room?

1. Lighting is one of the first things that comes to mind. My degree is in photography so I'm hypersensitive to room lighting. Warm lights and using fixtures to highlight different areas in a room can go a long way to make a room look very stylish.
2. Small-scale décor is a common mistake. Not every object in a room needs to be large but people tend to shy away from large statement pieces that help to anchor a room.
3. Paint may be one of the most dramatic changes you can make in any room. Change the paint color and change the entire room.
4. Mixing textures. Adding a throw on a chair can help to add variety in textures and create softness or warmth in a room.
5. Gallery wall areas can be a wonderful way to express your own personality. Mix multiple images in multiple sizes and then group them on a wall to create an interesting focal point.

What trends in the art space do you foresee happening as we continue along in 2022 and beyond? Technology has allowed us to add images to all sorts of materials in new ways on a personalized level that just didn't exist years ago. We have the ability to print on metal, canvas, and wood on a one-off basis. This print-on-demand ability allows us to offer a catalog of thousands of designs and can include customized elements designed uniquely for each customer. This allows our customers to find the art that perfectly matches their décor. Another trend is that artists can control their own destinies by going online. The days of having to rely on galleries to show your work are coming to an end. Today with social media and the ease of creating your own shop, artists are more in control than ever.

On a business front, what is the best advice you have ever gotten? You always create products with the customer in mind from the very start. I listen to my customers intensely. I look to see what they might like, and then I do more products that speak to that same customer. There's no ego in the products I design. It's all about creating art that my customers want. Inspiration is everywhere once you've trained your mind to see it. I've developed designs inspired by t-shirts, old master paintings and even vintage neon signs.

How important is social media and a proper strategy in order to succeed these days? The most valuable commodity in the world today is people's

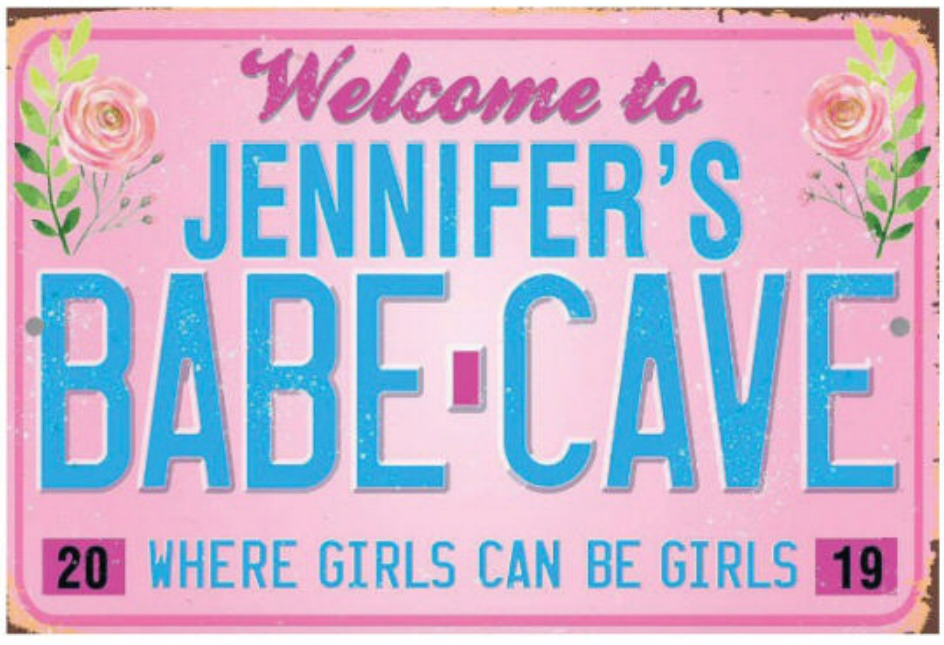
KEEP THE GATE CLOSED
NO MATTER WHAT THE DOGS SAY
Duke
Buddy
Penny

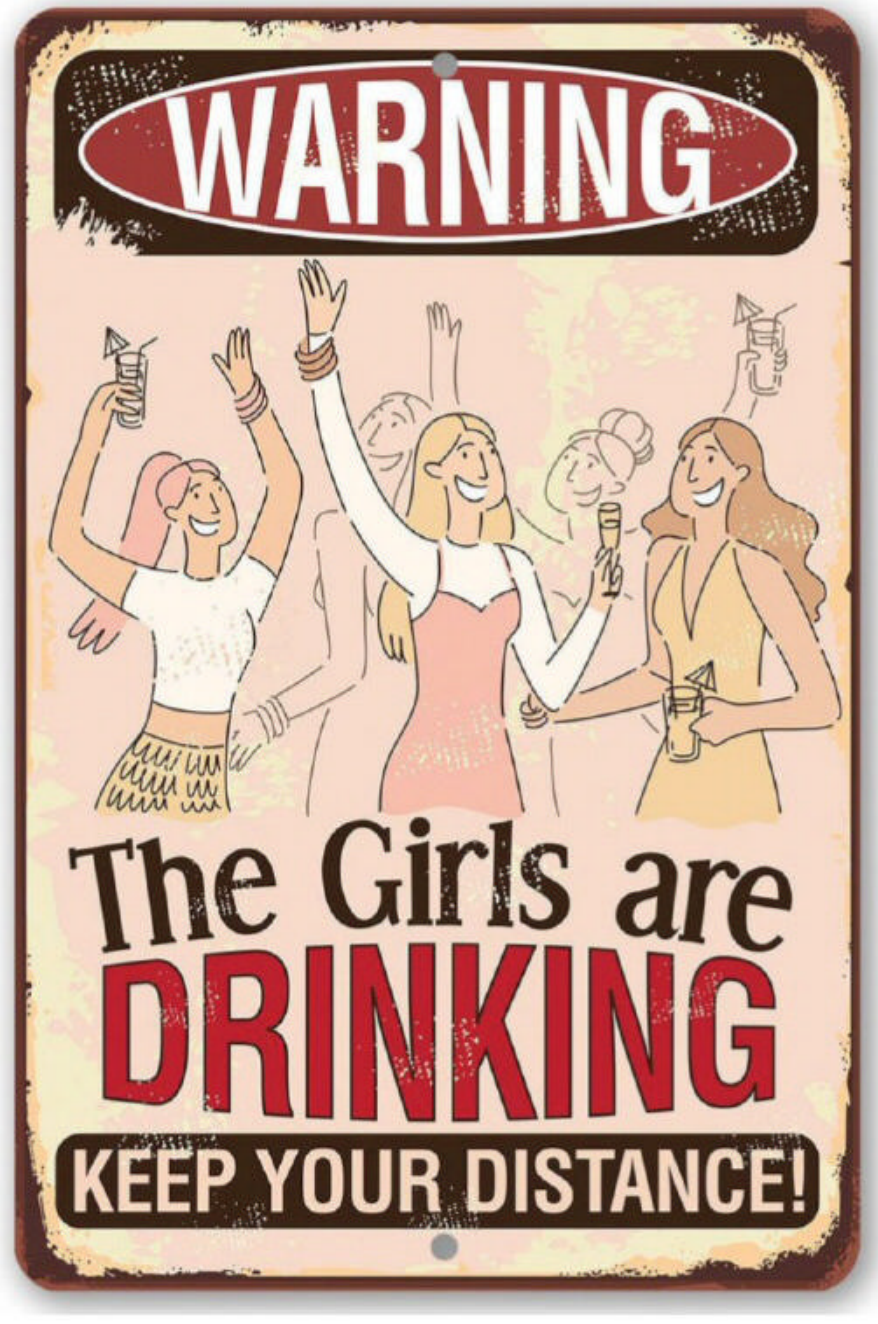
WARNING
BEER FRIDGE
FOOD OR OTHER CONTAINERS LEFT
INSIDE WILL BE TOSSED OUT.
UNDER PENALTY OF LAW

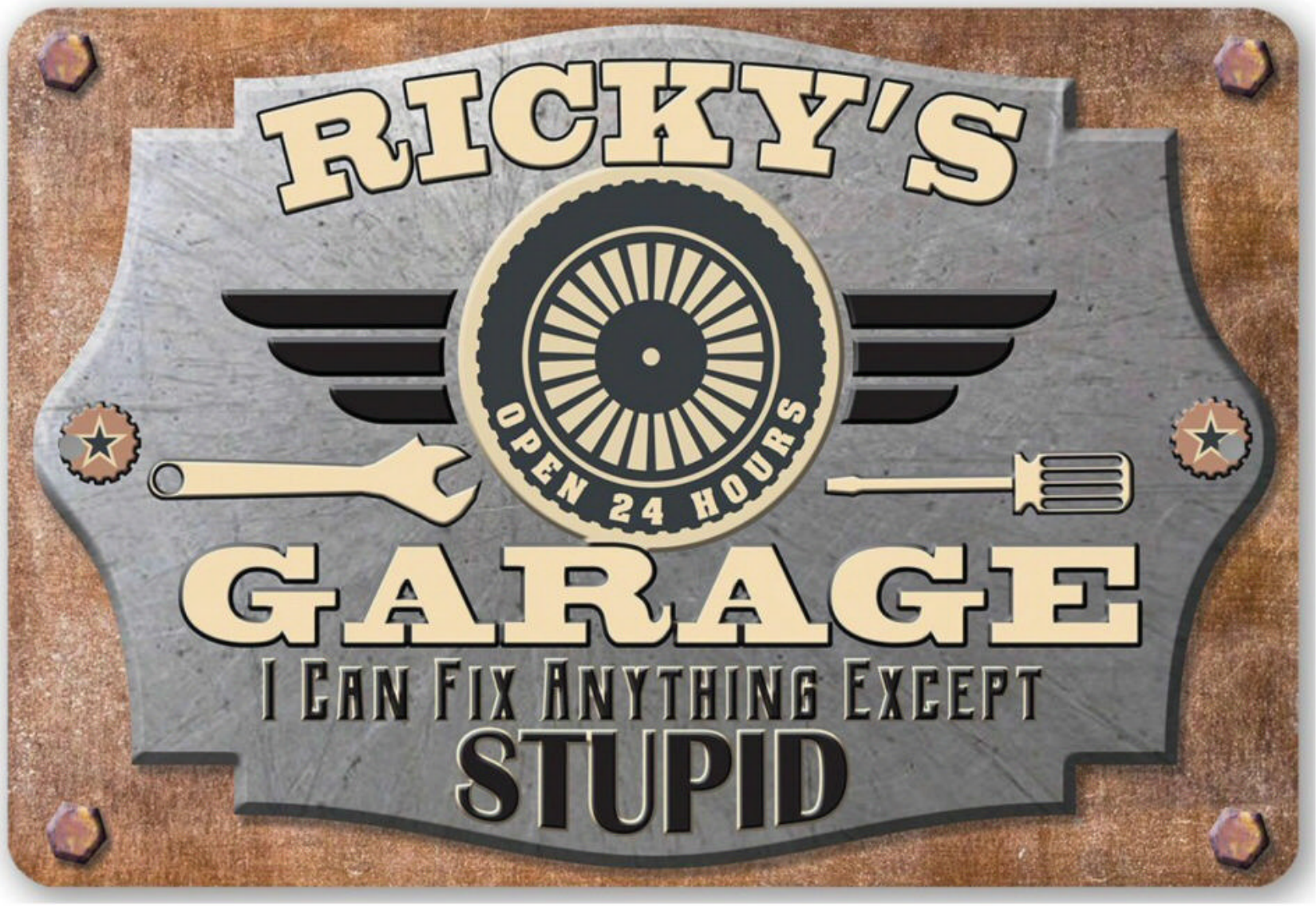
attention. There are so many daily distractions that everyone encounters. Getting through that noise and being seen is harder now than it's ever been. And with the ever-increasing cost of advertising, having a great social media presence is very important. Social media is a critical way for us to develop a community and communicate with our customers. We like to keep it fun and not just use it as a tool to sell products. We love to add posts that are funny while also being interactive as a way to entertain and learn more about our customers.

How has COVID-19 changed the way you approach things as a businessman? I think everyone was uncertain about what was going to happen. When the lockdown was announced and I told everyone to stay home, it was a no-brainer to me that I wasn't going to lay anyone off and paychecks would continue to come. I took the opportunity to build out a dedicated store LoneStarArt.com. We were shut down for weeks but to my staff's credit, I had several that asked me if they could come back in and work. A skeleton crew worked in isolated areas to safely continue delivering products to our customers. Once everyone was back, we were surprised to see the upsurge in sales. With so many people working from home, bland and ugly walls became the focus of an update. As our sales surged, we invested heavily in people, and equipment and expanding into other channels.

One decision I made years ago that has really been a benefit was to manufacture our own products and get our supplies from American companies. So many of my competitors have really struggled with shutdowns in China, supply chain issues, etc. We've encountered very few issues because we control the entire process from manufacture to sale. It allows us to keep the quality to our standards.



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I CAN FIX ANYTHING EXCEPT
STUPID

Swim at your own Risk!
BEER
This is a
Private Pool
The lifeguard is probably on a
Beer Run. We are not responsible for
shark bites or other personal injury.

FHM

Diana Vazquez

Model @officialmsdianavazquez
Photographer Jesse | @thehollywoodhustle

Such an absolute honor to have you on FHM! How are you feeling about this year? It's an honor to get to be on FHM. Mixed emotions for sure, but all I can do is keep on keeping on.

What are you most looking forward to this year? Probably all of the travel, seeing and meeting new people, and reconnecting myself with everything social media.

Top 3 best moments of your career so far? Published in magazines. Making an actual name for myself in the industry and getting to meet and be in a video with an iconic legendary music artist.

What was on your resolution list? To be frank, I've not made any resolutions in a long time. I make goals and continue even when they're met.

When it comes to goals and ambition, what are some of the things that keep you focused on getting there, what is the driving force behind it all? All of the support from not only friends and family, but from my fans, who on a regular basis tell me how great I've become and how I've inspired them in so many ways. It's very hard to stay motivated all of the time, but when you have an extraordinary support base, it helps a lot. People will always want to see you fail in life, but those people, that small group of people, will never get the satisfaction of seeing me on an off day because I keep going.

What are some of your favorite outdoor activities? Camping is a big one for me. Hiking is so relaxing and riding ATVs or any kind of 4X4.

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? Hygiene everything! Talking about other women while with me and instability...

Never have I ever... Wanted nor tried to take someone else's limelight.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? They're almost never single. Lie about what they really do besides model and fib about their "gym gains".

What is the best way to approach you as an admirer? Don't, talk about my "work"... Do, talk about how you like who I am and the creativity behind everything I do.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Instagram, Twitter, Facebook.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? Of course... Be sure to follow all of my platforms and always keep me in mind!

FULL STEAM AHEAD

The Steam Deck Review

Industry leaders Valve's first foray into the portable gaming market raised a few eyebrows when initially announced, it was met with great excitement and slight trepidation as Valve has dabbled in hardware before with less success than their software counterparts. However the Steam Deck looked different, it ticked all the right boxes and its only competitor is the now aging Nintendo Switch. So has Valve pulled off the unexpected and released the greatest handheld gaming system ever created? Well, it's definitely a yes and definitely a no.

The PC Portable Promise.

On paper the Steam Deck sounds like every PC gamer's dream, your entire Steam library now in the palm of your hands, and while Valve has come close to realizing that potential the Steam Deck does fall short in a few key areas. But let's first look at the console itself and focus on the positives first. The Steam Deck itself is massive, especially compared to the Switch, yet this is a good thing. It's 11.7 inches from end to end, which is more than two inches longer than a Switch, and at 1.5 pounds it's quite a bit heavier. Yet the Steam Deck isn't uncomfortable to hold, its form factor is actually surprisingly comfortable and allows for hours of gameplay without one's arms getting tired.

The LCD screen runs at 1200x800 at 60Hz, and it looks really good, although an OLED version would've been appreciated, yet one can understand the reasoning for not going with the more expensive option. Similar to the Switch, the screen is touch-enabled, so you can easily navigate through menus and even control some games with a quick tap here and a drag there. From a control perspective, the face buttons and control surfaces are near the top with a solid D-pad. The input buttons themselves are sturdy and marked in the familiar Xbox layout of ABXY letters, so those used to using an Xbox controller will feel right at home. The thumbsticks are wonderful and offer the smoothness and control one would expect from a premium console. Directly below each thumbstick is a trackpad with a subtle haptic feature you can toggle on or off in the menus.

The trackpads are a perfect replacement for the mouse features and it feels good for desktop applications and navigating in the Steam menus and it'll feel very familiar to anyone who's used a Steam Controller. As good as the trackpads are in recreating the mouse movements, don't expect to be playing Call of Duty on this and headshotting people left right, and center. The sensitivity of the trackpads are too much and even with tweaking getting the FPS movements to work just never felt right. Yet overall the feel and control of the Steam Deck is spot on and comfortable to play.

The user interface is a modified version of the Steam desktop app you're used to and navigation is easy and intuitive. Think Steam's big-screen mode on your desktop but now on a small screen. The Steam Deck comes in three models that feature 16GB of RAM, and Zen 2 and RDNA 2 architectures. However, they differ in storage types and storage capacities. The entry-level Steam Deck costs $399, and uses 64GB eMMC PCLe Gen 2 internal storage. Considering the size of many modern games, this model has rather skimpy storage. It also comes with a handy carrying case. For $529, the mid-tier Steam deck offers more and faster storage. It comes with a 256GB NVMe SSD (PCIe Gen 3 x4), as well as an exclusive Steam Community profile bundle and the aforementioned carrying case.

The priciest Steam Deck option costs $649 USD, but offers the fastest storage with its 512GB, high-speed NVMe SSD

(PCIe Gen 3 x4). This version comes with a premium, anti-glare, etched-glass screen; a unique carrying case; an exclusive virtual keyboard theme; and the Steam Community profile bundle.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

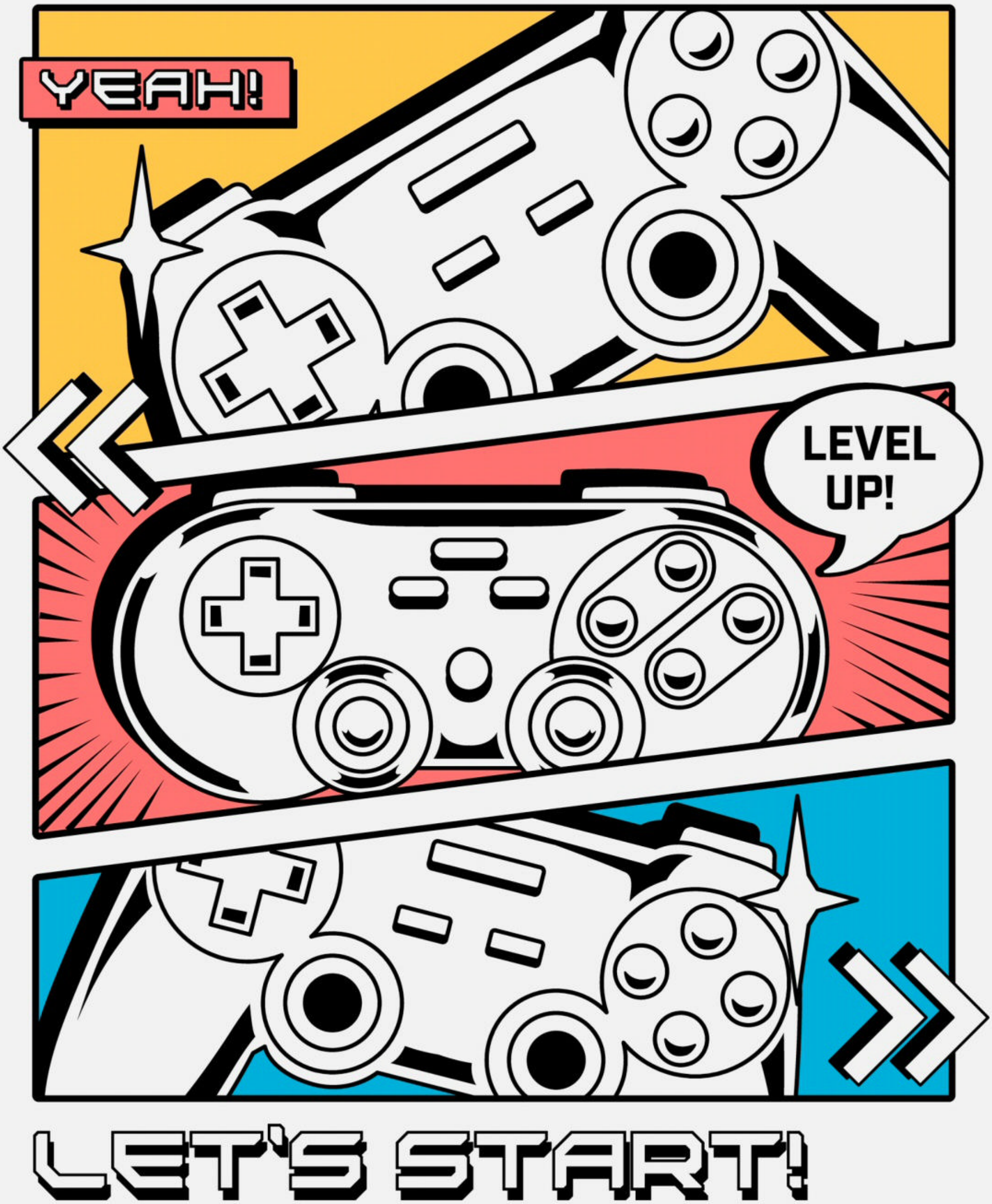
On paper, the Steam Deck sounds like a clear winner, yet sadly games aren't played on paper, and sadly the Steam Deck falls short in a few areas. The Steam Deck is powered by a 40Whr battery that delivers 2-8 hours of gameplay, according to Valve. This estimation assumes that a game is running at 30 frames per second, with 50 percent brightness and volume. Naturally, your mileage will vary. So the higher resolution you're playing at, and considering the graphical heft of the game you're playing your battery life might take a nosedive below the 2-hour spot, not ideal for a portable system if it needs to be recharged regularly. Yet if you play around with the easily accessible optimization settings then 4 hours is easy within your reach. Another major drawback for now, is the lack of compatible games, although Valve has promised to expand that list in the months and years to follow. Big new games like Elden Ring

R1
R2

are compatible and actually plays wonderfully on the Steam Deck, yet the promise of your entire Steam library in the palm of your hands is a bit far fetched at the moment. Another drawback is availability. Unlike other consoles on the market, the Steam Deck is not available from major retailers and can only pre-order through the website itself. Stock is very limited and some gamers out there currently have to wait until 2023 for their shiny new console to arrive. Although not the fault of the console itself, but with the imminent rumored announcement of the new Nintendo Switch, the allure of the Steam Deck might fade for many gamers.

For now, the Steam Deck is an interesting piece of tech and a wonderful first step into making PC gaming more portable. Yet due to its scarcity, underperforming battery life, and current lack of full Steam library accessibility the Steam deck is hard to recommend. If you can get your hands on one you are sure to have a wonderful time, but at its current price structure, there are one too many concerns about the future of the console itself. Valve sadly has a reputation for releasing great initial hardware but lacks the follow-up to ensure it becomes a future-proof concept. Hopefully, things will be different with the Steam Deck and in a few years' time, it will rival the success of the Nintendo Switch.

GAME ON!



LET'S START!

11 BEST GAMES ON GAME PASS RIGHT NOW

For years now Xbox's Game Pass offering has been its trump card in the battle with PlayStation, and although some experts reckon it can't be sustainable, we as gamers are benefiting. Thanks to Xbox constantly updating their service there are some amazing games we can play right now, so here is a list of the eleven best games on Game Pass you should download right now.

Forza Horizon 5

Without a doubt one of the best arcade racing games around, Forza Horizon 5 is also totally free to download on Game Pass. Continuing on from its music festival narrative, Horizon 5 takes you to the exotic location of Mexico, filled with breathtaking biodomes and exhilarating racing around every corner. This new exciting racer from Playground Games improves on nearly every aspect of its predecessor from the customization of maps, cars, and playlists, allowing you to sit back and cruise the coastline of Mexico. Chances are if you're a racing fan you already have this on your Xbox, but for those out there who want to play the most accessible and arguably best-looking racing game ever, you deserve to give this game a fair shake.

Tunic

What may look like a cutesy platformer, is actually a wonderful Dark Souls meets Legend of Zelda game. In Tunic you play as an adorable fox set on an adventure through dangerous lands filled with intentionally confusing mechanics and rock-hard boss encounters. Tunic hides almost all of its mechanics — even the ability to level up. Players can decipher a symbol-based language and collect pages of the game's in-game manual to learn its systems. Even Tunic's map is only found on the manual pieces, which is stylized like the in-box inclusions of old. It's a very unique take and makes Tunic feel special compared to its contemporaries. If you need a break from Elden Ring then Tunic might be the perfect tonic.

Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy

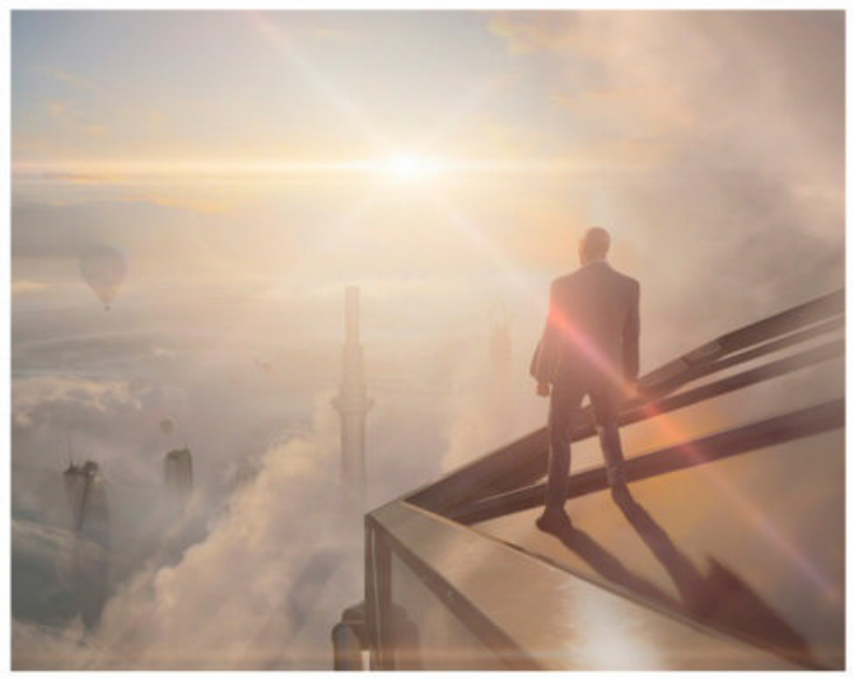
A lot of Marvel fans were quite disappointed with the release of Marvel's Avenger game, yet Square Enix turned it around with their take on Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy. Dropping the overly complicated online loot and shoot component of the Avengers game, Guardians of the Galaxy is just a fun and hilarious single-player romp with the biggest set of losers in the galaxy. Although the game itself doesn't feature the likenesses of Chris Pratt or Dave Bautista, it does a wonderful job of capturing what makes the Guardians such a unique and funny Marvel outing. With crazy-good graphics and a truly fun combat system, Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy is the best Marvel game you never played.

Unpacking

Moving house can be quite a stressful process, so why is a game about moving and unpacking on this list you may ask. Well, Unpacking is a wonderfully addictive game that has a simple premise yet interesting environmental storytelling. Unlike its real-life activity, Unpacking is calming and quite cathartic as you unpack all your goods and decide where to place it in your new home. You'll unpack multiple rooms and apartments in a single character's life, watching them grow from a child, to a college student, to a struggling young adult with a girlfriend who won't give them any apartment space. It's also the perfect game for those that don't have time for 100-hour epic games, it's a simple pick up, and play with each room only taking 20 minutes or so. If real-life stresses are getting you down, then Unpacking might be the perfect cathartic experience for you.

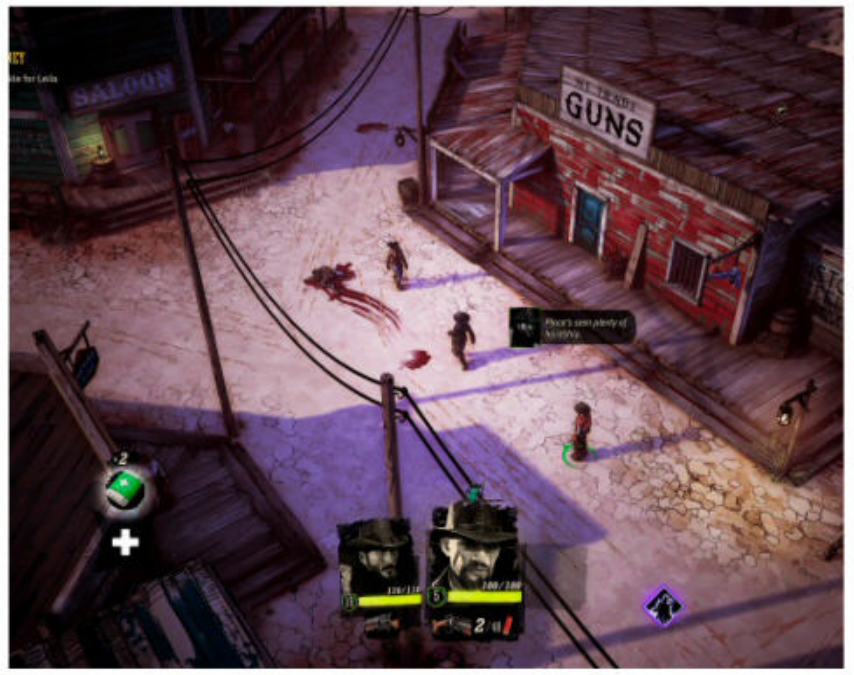
The Hitman Trilogy

One of the best trilogies ever in gaming is all yours on Game Pass. Hitman Trilogy includes all three Hitman games with hours upon hours of sandbox puzzles at your fingertips. You play as Agent 47, a hitman for hire that travels to exotic locations around the world to take out their target in clever and ingenious and often hilarious methods. Although the game is about killing people, it's rarely overly violent and contains some of the best assassinations in any game ever created. It's also a fantastic game just to mess around in and experiment with the best ways to take out your dastardly target. With dozens of unique maps and scenarios, you will never tire from taking out the bad guys in fun and unique ways.



Weird West

Discover a dark fantasy reimagining of the Wild West where lawmen and gunslingers share the frontier with fantastical creatures. Journey through the story of a group of atypical heroes, written into legend by the decisions you make in an unforgiving land. Each journey is unique and tailored to the actions taken, a series of high-stakes adventures where everything counts and the world reacts to the choices you make. Form a posse or venture forth alone into an otherworldly confines of the Weird West and make each legend your own. Weird West is a supernatural western-style immersive sim that takes the best parts of the old-school western movies and combines it with the weird and wonderful world of horror.



Mass Effect: Legendary Edition

The second-best trilogy available on Game Pass is also one of the most iconic RPGs of all time. The Mass Effect series has become known as one of the greatest western RPG and this is the perfect collection to jump in on if you've never experienced the adventures of Commander Shepard and his ragtag team of space adventurers. The Legendary Edition contains all three Mass Effect games along with every single DLC ever released. Mass Effect is a game about choices and those choices have consequences that will run through all three games. Visit wonderful planets and shoot your way through enemies as you try to save not just the human race but the galaxy as a whole from the terrifying Reaper invasion.

Shredders

Truly great snowboarding games are few and far between, but Shredders looks to finally capture the technicality and fun aspect of the beloved sport. You and your buddy are making snowboarding videos at the Frozen Wood resort when a local brand ambassador makes an offer for a couple of sponsored videos. This offer gives you a glimpse into a whole new world of snowboarding, professional riders, snowmobiles, and epic features to shred. An invitational has attracted a whole bunch of pro-riders to the area, and you have a chance to meet some of them, learn a bunch of their moves, and possibly even get a chance to join them in the kick-ass invitational. Shredders is a love letter to snowboarding with some of the best controls out there and if you're looking for a chill time out on the slopes this game is definitely worth checking out.

Halo Infinite

The acclaimed Halo series has found itself in a weird space since original developers Bungie left Xbox, yet Halo Infinite goes a long way to recapture the magic of the Halo universe. For the first time ever Master Chief finds himself in an open world to explore with brand new mechanics and the famous Halo gunplay. Traversing the open world is made even more fun thanks to the new grappling mechanic and the story itself is serviceable as you hunt down the new evil bad across the beautifully rendered open world. The multiplayer is addictive as ever and with constant updates and support from 343 developers, Halo Infinite is the perfect game to jump back in for new players or Halo veterans.

Mortal Kombat 11

Game Pass has its fair share of fighting games, but the one that truly stands out is Mortal Kombat 11. This infamous series is back to its best, with incredible graphics, over-the-top fatalities, and an over-the-top cheesy single-player story. The all-new Custom Character Variations give you unprecedented control of your fighters to make them your own. The new graphics engine showcases every skull-shattering, eye-popping moment, bringing you so close to the fight you can feel it. Featuring a roster of new and returning Klassic Fighters, Mortal Kombat's best-in-class cinematic story mode continues the epic saga over 25 years in the making. It's uber-violent and ridiculous, exactly what a Mortal Kombat game should be.

Death's Door

If you've always wanted to get into the Souls game, but were put off by the difficulty or the generally glumness of the world, then Death's Door is the perfect gateway game for you. Reaping souls of the dead and punching a clock might get monotonous but it's honest work for a Crow. The job gets lively when your assigned soul is stolen and you must track down a desperate thief to a realm untouched by death - where creatures grow far past their expiry and overflow with greed and power. Utilize melee weapons, arrows, and magic to overcome a fantastic array of beasts and demigods. Mistakes are punished and victory is rewarded. Gain an edge by customizing your character stats and mastering the abilities and upgrades you obtain. It might look like a cutesy game, but Death's Door oozes class and a wonderful combat experience.

YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO FACE IT, YOU'RE ADDICTED TO... SOMETHING.

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

Smugly tucking into my steak, I looked across the table at my dinner guest and uttered a stunningly stupid question, “What made you an addict?” My friend sublimely staved off any urge to punch me in the face and simply responded, “You first. What made you an addict?” My enforced silence no doubt accompanied a puzzlement that gripped my face. I was then handed an incredible opportunity to learn from my dispassionate companion. We had known each other for a few years, and unbeknown to me he had factored in my observable behaviors and often indiscrete confessions before reaching the verdict that I was addicted to risk. As he commenced the litany of charges against me covering different terrains – business, relationships, sex, and openness – he made a very persuasive pitch.

My knowledge of his addictive behaviors was framed around the usual suspects – illicit drugs and alcohol – and up to this point I had nonchalantly and inaccurately formed the opinion that addiction was a narrow consequence for those of a weaker, more destitute disposition than I. What an arrogant wanker I was, although this rude awakening lay dormant for several years as, to be perfectly honest, the term ‘addiction’ was a label that I wasn’t yet prepared to explore openly, let alone admit to. I filed this enigma away, believing that my behavior was in some way excusable, didn’t really cause any harm, and was inconsistent with the general notion of dependence. Yet the one thing at which I was consistent was being a colossal and egotistical asshole.

My own unconscious bias had provided a safe haven where I could look disparagingly at the plight of others whilst self-righteously closing my eyes to the wider implications of compulsive behaviors. The trigger point for my reacquaintance with this latent cognitive conundrum was the very public portrayal of

the relationship between Ghislaine Maxwell and the late Jeffrey Epstein. There is enough source information out there about this couple —suffice to say that their behaviors were addictive and destructive. But here was the twist. They were powerful, wealthy, and had a binding influence within the highest echelons of society. They didn't appear to be pitiful, powerless, or puny. It was time to better understand how addiction takes hold, the signs, symptoms, and hopefully, salvation.

I had been lucky to meet Rory and hear firsthand his moving story. He articulated his own journey of addiction in the most animated of ways. Humour, highs, and hedonism were countered by death, despair, and destruction. In addition, as a professionally trained practitioner, he was my ideal guide. Taking a monumental deep breath, I asked my first question and simply listened.

Was my dinner guest correct? Can addiction grip us all?

Rory drew such a deep breath that I was convinced that the hitherto static window blinds adjacent to us fluttered for a brief moment. Clearing his throat, he simply replied, "Yes," nodding emphatically as if to reiterate this unerring statement.

How did you become an addict?

"No-one ever sets out to be an addict; I certainly didn't. My addiction was drugs. I never used drugs to block out the past or to deal with trauma or as a learned behavior from family. In fact, I had a great upbringing and took drugs because I really, really fucking enjoyed them!" Rory's emphatic smile withered away almost instantly as he added, "Well at least in the beginning."

"I grew up in the 1990s when the rave scene was kicking off and the birth of the dance

revolution began —something I still feel very proud of to this day, despite the path it put me on. Back in the day coming down off E's, Whizz, and Acid after a three, sometimes four-night session, wasn't always easy, especially when you had work or college the next day. We often used other recreational drugs like "draw," the old slang for cannabis resin, and prescription meds that someone had nicked off their nan." Up until this disclosure, I felt an immediate curiosity about the dance scene and wanted to know more, but somehow the connection with my grandparents killed the moment. I smiled at Rory, encouraging him to continue.

"Then it happened one night back at a flat that we ended up at; I was introduced to "Brown" (heroin). The fella who gave me some explained how it was great at bringing you back down. Of course, I lived up to my life motto at the time, 'I will try anything once' —what a twat —and so the journey began."

"Despite what the red-top papers and the news at the time told you about 'one hit and you're hooked,' that isn't actually how it works. Long story short —it took about a year for me to realize I had a problem with heroin dependency."

"I was quite happy using heroin for a while, as I believed its sole purpose was managing a come down; but once a week became twice a week, and so on. Even at this point, I would argue that I was not an addict. To understand addiction, you must first understand dependency because that's the key motivator and driver for addiction —well it certainly was for me."

When did you realize that you were addicted?

I wanted to better understand the trigger points, assuming that there were definable ones, within an experience that would inevitably purge cognitive reasoning of its usual ability to keep us all away from the light of damaging temptation. I could comprehensively validate this position given the periods of destruction my own addiction had thrust upon my life.

"I don't think you realize or come to terms with being an addict, until your arse is hanging out of your jeans, and you are queuing for your daily dose of methadone! This is the point I started to ask questions of myself and realized I had an addiction problem. My friends and family giving up on me and standing in the custody block at the police station and realizing that the sergeant was now a familiar figure in my life only reinforced this realization."

Rory talked about the concept of reaching "rock bottom," confirming this place as the most daunting yet liberating moment. I too identified with this notion. For me, it was a scary, embarrassing, and utterly traumatic time where the ones I loved became the unintended victims.

"The realization of my rock bottom moment was bizarre. Of all the things that had happened to me, this was, by contrast, quite mundane. I knew a mate – to be fair this is a loose term as he was simply some guy, I knew would be scoring that day. I had to walk eight miles to his place and during this infamous trek, I realized I had lost everything. I stunk. I knew that certain people would eventually catch up with me and I would be well and truly fucked. I tried to think of what I had left in my life. It was just drugs. They had become my best friends. I'll never forget that day. I was walking along this long straight road where I had grown up and I broke down crying. I remember an old lady asking if I was all right. That was it for me."

Seemingly out of nowhere Rory's somber reflection was overtaken by loud, joyous laughter!

"When I got to my friend's house, I think I had the most emotionally intelligent conversation I'd ever had whilst using! It was there that we decided upon the plan to get me into a methadone clinic."

Rory took stock and reflected upon his current professional role supporting addicts as they seek to duplicate his transition away from dependency. "In the fifteen-plus years that I've been privileged to work with people and their substance misuse when we talk about addiction, we have to talk about dependency first, as well as tolerance – what can your body take? For me, dependency is about the physical need to do

something to perform, whilst addiction is all the behaviors that wrap around dependency – so the two become one." In an instant, this definition clarified my own addictive tendencies and why I had convinced myself, whilst sneering at those that in my jaundiced opinion had the real addictions of drink and drugs, that they were normal.

How has addiction framed your life?

"This is a really interesting question and for me it's the one that makes me feel really nervous when answering. I feel very lucky; many of my peer groups from when I was growing up are no longer with us. In fact, there are only three of us left. One is still actively using and the other one is quite unique as they knew when to stop. For me addiction has framed my life in a very strange way, and the reason I get nervous about this is that if it weren't for my addiction I wouldn't be where I am now – with an amazing wife, two fantastic children, and paying a mortgage —things I could've never imagined at a certain time of my life."

Rory smiled broadly as he recalled a key milestone in his life, some years after he left rehabilitation —buying his first car. "Ok it was an old banger, but it was mine! Bought and paid for! I thought, 'This belongs to me!' This is something I have worked for." He then paused for a moment, with his glinting smile morphing into a purse-lipped frown whilst reflecting upon his time in rehab. "I don't use the term 'after I recovered.' I have never deemed myself as recovered due to my own beliefs and how I deal with my past and my liking for drugs." This disclosure was a relief for me since my own past had shaped me and, like Rory, I had reached a place where I was content too. Perhaps the burying of the past would simply allow those ghosts to rise again?

"So why does this make me feel worried about saying this? I have family and friends who aren't role model citizens, should we say, and when I try and tell them the wrongs and rights about their behavior they say, "Well you have done alright out of it

haven't you?" That's the bit that makes me nervous because in all of that I have been extremely lucky, but I have lost people to overdoses as a direct result of being on drugs. I had a friend who I grew up with who went down a different route to me —supplying drugs; he was found with his face missing in a layby. Things are brilliant now, but they haven't always been."

I coaxed Rory to explore the physical and emotional scars, since his use of the term 'brilliant' seemed at odds with his life narrative, by his own admission encountering some very dark places. "In terms of the physical side, I never contracted hepatitis C – I'd say that eighty percent of the people in my network with similar life stories did. I've also lost people I know to HIV. Emotionally?" Pausing momentarily, he continued in a more hushed tone, "Yeah, I still have user dreams. I still wake up thinking that I have relapsed. I've been off drugs a lot longer than I was on them now, but I still think back to those situations I have been in and that does create anxiety that can lead to panic attacks. Emotionally I don't think it ever leaves you." I nodded, knowing that my own demons were still there, but like Rory, the requisite release fuse had burnt out long ago.

How does a person become addicted? What biological events occur that make us dependent?

"There are all sorts of theories and models that seek to explain addiction; for example – addictive personalities. But quite frankly I think that's a load of bollocks! Have I got an addictive personality? No different I guess to the next man, woman, or child! I think as humans we seek out behaviors that reward and reinforce the chemistry in our brains, such as dopamine that connects with that old fight or flight syndrome, and once we get rewarded with good feelings, we yearn for them again. It's primeval."

"However, you try to understand this and attempt to deal with it, whatever works for you works for you! The feeling I got with drugs in the early days was simply fantastic! Even with heroin,

there is this immense feeling of being wrapped up in cotton wool. What's really weird about heroin is that the first few times I tried it, I literally threw up. I couldn't keep anything down. But it didn't stop me from going back because this nausea was completely and overwhelmingly counteracted by the incredible feelings that I got by taking it. The euphoria is short-lived, and you crash down, creating the need once again. That's when addiction takes hold."

Are there any potential triggers that are more likely to create addictive behaviors?

"I wouldn't say triggers as such, but the environment can play a massive part. Deprivation often causes a sub-culture of drug use. Of all the people I have assessed, although their individual stories are unique, the journeys are relatively the same. Although many users hate the term, 'gateway drugs' are enablers for the harder, more dangerous substances." Rory mapped out a simple yet oh-so-familiar route —drinking alcohol and smoking weed at an early age.

Collecting his thoughts, Rory agonized over those he had also met who had turned to drugs following huge personal trauma —rape victims, people abused or neglected as children, and domestic abuse victims. Drugs provided a way out. An effective if temporary respite from those horrors the rest of us would perhaps never countenance.

Rory continued, "When addiction happens the acceleration of associated behaviors can be frighteningly rapid. I remember meeting a teacher who had led a pretty sheltered life until they met some unsavory characters and lost their house and everything else within three months."

What treatments work and can someone ever totally break free of addiction?

"If I knew the answer to this one mate, I wouldn't be driving a fucking Skoda that's for sure! This is the million-dollar question."

Feeling a tad embarrassed, I was nonetheless reassured by Rory that the numerous theories and approaches boiled down to the pragmatic conclusion of 'each to their own' – meaning very often the need to try several until one fitted. But I guess if the will were stoked the wait could be negotiated.

"Whatever you are addicted to, be it drugs, drink, sex, and yes risk, my advice is never write anything off. If the cap doesn't fit, then don't fucking wear it!"

Rory reflected upon a conversation he once had with a colleague after he had, by his own admission, become overconfident in writing the concluding chapter of his own journey after years of addiction. This wise sage simply declared, "Your relapse is waiting outside that door doing fucking push-ups, ready for you!"

This uncomplicated lifehack equates to —you can never truly let your guard down whatever addiction became your ally — even me! This wise master was chillingly right – you can never totally unshackle yourself from the ever-watching specter of addiction. And perhaps that is the symbiotic relationship any addict needs, to accept and celebrate the mutually destructive outcome of courting the wrong partner in crime, even if temptation often dazzles with the most seductive of sunsets and soothing harmonies, whispering "One more time won't hurt..."

My vilification of my dinner guest all those years ago has never left my psyche and with Rory's candor, I was better able to grasp the concept that addiction covers a significantly wider terrain than I had ever imagined. Any dysfunctional and excessive behavior born out of dependence has the power to ultimately corrupt, and those like me who sought sanctuary by conveniently calling out the notable villains of drink and drugs are perhaps the most fraudulent and futile. Like a pot of brilliant white paint tainted by a few drops of black, a greyness of character would always lurk, patiently waiting to purge all the good by one reckless act of self-indulgence.

The image of my nemesis relentlessly working out, waiting to take me on again has given me a simple message. Is the risk worth it?

KAITLYN JAYNE

NATURALLY ELEGANT

Model | @fitt4pleasure
Photographer Arthur St. John | @arthurstjohn
HMUA Taylor Jazz @taylor_jazz
Location @ocmansion

Welcome to FHM USA! How does it feel to grace the cover? Thank you. To say this is an honor is an understatement, it truly is much more than that. Shooting a magazine cover for the first time at 48 years old has been the highlight of 2022. Landing the cover of FHM in my own country, is a dream come true.

Tell us about the photo shoot which landed you on the cover... I had the pleasure of being photographed by Arthur St. John, at the OC Mansion in Orange County California. Arthur is amazing to work with and the location was absolutely breath-taking. We shot a variety of looks keeping my appearance elegant and natural. I didn't want the photo shoot to end.

Where are you from? Where do you live now? I am originally from a small town in western Connecticut. Over the years I lived in a number of different states. Currently, I call New York home, but I look forward to moving somewhere warmer. Preferably with beachfront so I can wear bikinis all day.

Favorite movie of all time: I typically choose to watch comedy and adventure packed movies. My favorite movie of all time is Raiders Of The Lost Ark. I love the mixture of funny scenes with action. I am a big fan of all the Indiana Jones movies, and I've been known to binge watch them all on an occasional rainy day.

Favorite actor of all time: Harrison Ford. I love his side smirk.

Favorite color: I always have a hard time answering this question. I don't really have an absolute favorite color. When it comes to clothing and lingerie, I tend to always choose black. However, I do like red, purple, and green for most everything else. I'm truly not partial to any one color, which makes shopping for me easy.

Do you prefer making money or spending it? I enjoy making money equally as much as spending it. I put my career on hold for many years to raise my family. Now that I am my own boss, my income is dependent on how much time and energy I put into my business. Making money inevitably makes spending it more enjoyable. It's the reward for all of your hard work. So, for me it's fun and rewarding. I've never been a frivolous spender. However, I do enjoy rewarding myself with things that bring me pleasure.

Name three things on your bucket list:
* Publish my Memoir
* Expand my fitt4pleasure brand
* Visit the Egyptian Pyramids

What is your best physical feature? I take pride in my appearance. I work extremely hard to stay in top physical shape. I work out in the gym 5 days a week strength training and doing cardiovascular exercises. Yet, I think my best physical features are my eyes. I have green eyes and in certain light they appear to be blue. I get complimented for my eyes almost as often as my chest. (LOL)

Can you tell us a secret about you? It's not really a secret however, I don't like to wear a lot of clothes. You should always call or text first before stopping by my house. I am usually not dressed for company.

Biggest turn on / turn off? The biggest turn on is a well-groomed man with a sense of humor. I love to laugh so if you can make me laugh that is a big plus. Anyone with a narcissistic personality is a huge turn off. I prefer a confident man, not an arrogant man.

Where do you see yourself 10 years from now? For someone who is a "fly by the seat of her pants" type, seeing beyond tomorrow can be a challenge, LOL. 10 years from now I would like to see myself retired and being served margaritas on the beach.

Where can our readers find you? (social media)
My website: fitt4pleasure.com
IG: fitt4pleasure
Twitter: fitt4pleasure

IMAGINE THAT...

What a goal! Off the upright, into the bottom corner! A Les Bradd piledriver from just outside the box with only minutes remaining! I couldn't contain my excitement and did a lap of the garage in celebration. My Notts County Subbuteo table football team were invincible! Each plastic figure, hand-painted in the famous black and white stripes, were numbered too. And even if Eric Probert had a blob of brown paint over the side of his face it didn't matter. These pieces of plastic, which were flicked to kick, had been elevated to a near reality by my imagination. A beautiful side of humanity that allowed me to create a fantasy world anywhere I chose to use it.

By Ian Kirke | Twitter @ianjkirke

Although I managed the best team at school I played in front of some woeful crowds. Ten thousand. Pitiful. Our league rules dictated that each person represented five thousand fans. Any subsequent people, such as parents or siblings, would be an extra quota, multiplied every time they walked back into the vicinity of play. Pets carried an additional value. Andrew Whittard, the manager of frequent league runners-up Tottenham Hotspur had his pitch in an open plan dining room. With a menagerie of animals too he regularly drew crowds of over one hundred thousand! Even with that home advantage Notts never lost at White Hart Lane! I never imagined losing.

Then a magical event occurred, and my dad flipped my pitch, mounted on chipboard, and built me a speedway track on the other side! Although Subbuteo had finished producing this variation, he wrote to the head office and received some bases and cardboard inserts. With four riders in each heat, I had only red, blue, white, and yellow bases. Each race contained the same four pieces, propelled around one lap by a ball bearing rolled down a steel tube which, as an engineer, dad had modified at work. The first heat would have the number one riders at the tapes. The elite performers. Heat two, the reserves race, always good for a faller. The same pieces every time. Only my imagination made them real. For those in the know when a speedway team is trailing by six points the manager can bring in a tactical substitute. You guessed it, the same figure but endowed with the extra speed and track craft of my imagination!

Recently, whilst watching the acclaimed documentary 56-Up, a fascinating insight into the lives of a group of Britons born in 1964 reviewed at seven-year intervals created by the late Canadian director Paul Almond, I was struck by a young boy who was asked what he wanted to do when he grew up. He joyfully replied, "an astronaut!" Then followed with a more matter-of-fact statement, "if this doesn't happen, a bus driver."

Was this what real life was all about? Spirit snuffed out almost immediately by pragmatism. Why had my imagination been so important as a kid? Had I lost it? Was this inevitable? Had I managed to realize any of my childhood dreams? In an instant, I felt the need to explore whether my imagination had been a constant in my life and if adulthood should necessarily steal our dreams. Had my Subbuteo playing days created a destiny and if it had, where was the evidence? And what about the encyclopedias that I had wondered at, taking me to far off mystical places which as a child caused my mouth to open in awe? So many questions. Then I read a quote - funny how when you are looking stuff can suddenly appear as if by magic. "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you anywhere." I couldn't argue with the judgment of Albert Einstein, could I?

At sixteen, a tad older than me when I had skilfully managed my imaginary Notts team to a league and cup double, Einstein imagined pursing a beam of light, shaping his development of special relativity. He engaged with many thought experiments underpinned by his enduring imagination - relativity of simultaneity, the notion that it is impossible to conclude that two distinct events occur at the same time if they are separated in space was explained when he imagined an everyday scene at the railway station.

He imagined a stationary commuter witnessing two lightning bolts simultaneously striking both ends of a moving train, concluding that a passenger standing on the train would see the bolts striking at different times. If it helps, visualize two simultaneous games of Subbuteo, one in Nottingham, the other in Turin, Italy. They appear to an observer on earth to kick off at the same time, but to a different observer flying between the two cities they will appear to have kicked off at slightly different times. Why Turin? In 1903 the now mighty Juventus needed a new kit and Tom Savage, one of the founding players, was born in Nottingham. He pursued his dream, leading to Juventus adopting the Notts County strip in which they still proudly play in today.

In all honesty, at age sixteen, the theory of relativity was the last thing on my mind as I tried to grapple with the most complex of theories: relationships with the opposite sex. I reluctantly boxed up my Subbuteo team and placed my imaginary sports arena against the wall, at the far end of the garage. I kind of assumed that any reference to my flicking skills would have been a serious let-down once I showed any girl my pitch elevated upon my mum's ironing board. But was I alone in this transition from dreamer to a doer? A little fieldwork with folk of a similar age revealed a depressing theme. The wannabe ballerina, actor, singer, cowboy, superwoman, novelist, and astronaut somehow didn't check in during adulthood. Although I was a keen youthful Imagineer I somewhat surprisingly

didn't dream about what I wanted to do as a vocation.

But if it's good enough for Einstein, one of the cleverest human brains ever, can the more ordinary of us recapture the fundamentals? Although aspects of the human brain still remain a mystery, there is a significant groundswell of scientific opinion that holds that the mechanics of imagination involve a network of connections which share information across separate regions of the brain. These cerebral zones harmonize to create mental images.

When you use your imagination, you are firing up the engine in your head and giving it the best possible tune-up ever! Arguably we can all do it, yet what is the disconnect between childhood dreams and adult reality? Then I remembered my initial introduction to eBay - principally buying back all my childhood sports memorabilia that I eagerly disposed of as a shy teenager. The prevailing culture of dating, gaining employment, and 'growing up' just didn't seem to fit with a bedroom full of football scarves, speedway pennants, and posters, with the space below my bed crammed full of Subbuteo. And with those decisions to declutter I lost my imagination, and unwittingly succumbed to Lamarckism.

Jean-Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet Chevalier de Lamarck (no doubt known to his close chums as 'Lamy') was a French naturalist, born in 1744. He theorized that the organs you use the most, over time, get stronger. Equally, those we underuse suffer the opposite affliction. Poke around any gym and this hypothesis is tangible to both the eyes and the nose (the not-so-wonderful whiff of the body odor of the person next to you). Strong arms and legs allow us to carry heavy weights and often the burdens of others, some of whom think the more whacky thoughts and often drive around in the top of the range Ferraris and live in a Beverley Hills mansion. Like any other organ, your brain needs exercise, and those disparate regions of the grey matter don't connect by accident. The onset of adultness had, amongst other things, furloughed my imagination.

The majority of my cohort of reminiscers were rather more blunt. Posing the question, 'Is imagination more important than knowledge?' these replies summed up the tone: "No, as imagination won't get you through life"; "I believe that imagination, most of the time, is an innocent part of life, harmless in that, it is an individual, at a certain time, making things up in his or her mind, a safe pastime." The rebel in the room replied, "There is so much pleasure to be gained from letting your mind run wild ..." But would all the grown-ups in the room uphold the general assertion?

I wonder how Martin Cooper, the hugely successful American inventor and entrepreneur would view such perceptions. He imagined the Motorola flip phone, based on inspiration drawn from the wristwatch worn by Dick Tracy, the 1930s stateside comic strip detective. Launched in 1996 I couldn't wait to buy one. There existed at the time an urban myth that it had been born out of the Star Trek communicator, although Gene Roddenberry's epic science fiction creation and the emanations that followed must surely have had some sway on the development of virtual reality? I can't wait for science fact to eventually catch up with science fiction so that I can order my own Holodeck.

I have a hunch that Bill Gates, Elon Musk, and Richard Branson rarely missed an opportunity to rev up the brain cells that collectively charge the superhuman power that is imagination. On the contrary, one of my learned friends exclaimed, "I firmly believe that becoming an adult really kicks the shit out of any imagination or dreams you had as a child." Our discovery of 'facts' often supported by data reminds me of the quote,

the origin of which is somewhat sketchy but no less instructive, "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics."

As Paul King, visiting scholar at the University of California Berkeley Redwood Center for Theoretical Neuroscience, puts it, "As people become 'good at life', they develop habits of thought that serve them well. These habits are thought styles that 'work' (get results, impress people, carry us through difficult situations)." However, these learned strategies come at a cost. We become good at going through the motions, adapt more readily to social norms, and become hostages of our own success. By sticking to the 'facts' (that can often be untrue) success, within the context of human socialization, becomes easier to achieve, albeit a victim of this apparent victory is our imagination. According to our learned friend, "Why be random when you can be right? Unfortunately, what works is what worked in the past and misses the enigmatic paths that lead to unexpected surprises."

I have to say that this logical convention, which I unwittingly signed up to when I closed my Subbuteo box for the last time, made me somewhat melancholy about the chances I may have missed during adulthood. And had I, without thinking, suppressed the imaginations of my own children? Asking my adult-only cohort, 'If you have children, did you encourage them to use their imagination and dream big?' unsurprisingly every parent championed this vision with fireworks, big bass drums, and foghorns. I hate to rain on your parade, but I agree with Jessie Potter's uncompromising words, uttered in Wisconsin in 1981, "If you always do what you've always done, you always get what you've always gotten." No parent should be surprised if their kids end up following the already well-trodden path, confirmed by the phlegmatic observation of a friend, "I'm a realist and I think they've picked that up from me."

This observation was amplified by one of my chirpy contributors who piped up, "Between childhood and retirement, my imagination took a long hiatus." This resonated with me since it accurately described my reconnection with my imagination which had been in hibernation for far too long.

On April 23rd, 2016, I met and shook hands with the real Les Bradd on the Meadow Lane pitch. Shortly afterwards, as a trainee Speedway referee, I walked the track at Plymouth. In between, I touched the encyclopedia images: The Great Wall of China and the Taj Mahal, to name just a couple. The only thing in the way of setting foot on Antarctica is COVID-19. My dreams have started to come true even if I still don't know what I want to be!

If you are lucky enough to have kids, or have any influence over them, my advice is don't pack all of their toys away too soon. How different would my life have been if I had kept on flicking for a little longer and not consigned the very tools of my active imagination to the back of the garage, the attic, or worst still the bin. If you are still unconvinced then maybe the sage words of the English poet William Blake will move you towards the light, "What is now proved was once only imagined."

MOVIE NIGHTS

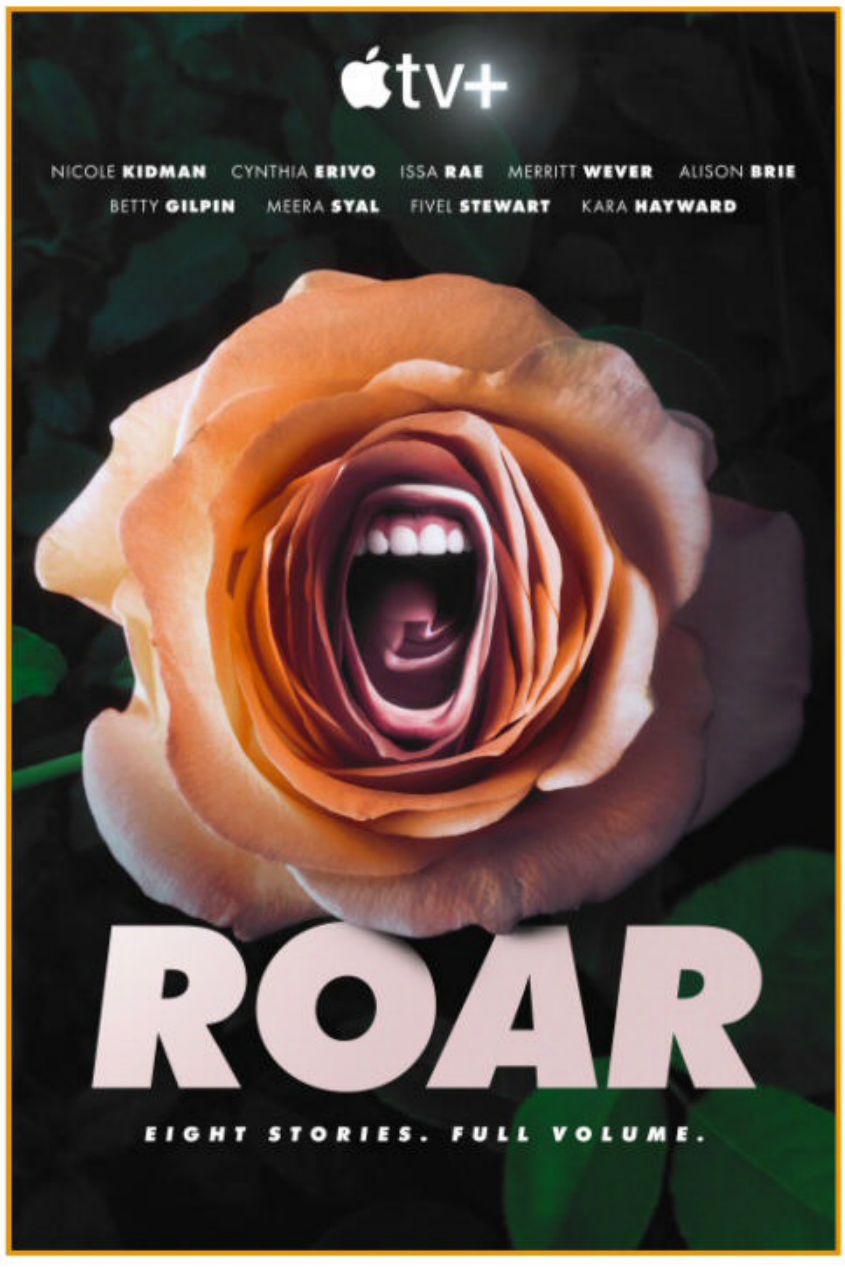
8 reasons why Apple TV+ is a must-have

Apple TV+ has come under a lot of criticism since its initial launch, with many claiming the streaming service was dead in the water. Yet as of late, Apple's long-term vision with its own unique streaming service has come to fruition as some of the best shows currently out there are all Apple originals. It might lack the vast libraries its competitors have, but Apple clearly went for quality over quantity. Here are eight reasons why Apple TV+ is a must-have these days.

MENU

Severance

For fans of the '70s, dystopian vibes will instantly fall in love with this intense thriller set around the idea of work-life balance. Set at Lumon Industries, Mark Scout (Adam Scott) leads a team of employees who have surgically divided their memories from work and real life thanks to the severance procedure. When new employee Helly (Britt Lower) rejects her new life as an indentured office drone, the true nature of their work begins to get called into question. Their efforts to find out who they are and what it is they do from nine to five lead to a mystery full of thrilling reveals and plot twists. Severance is a unique look at a very relevant topic, but goes deeper and explores human emotions, what it truly means to be alive and the desperate need all of us have for some form of human interaction. It's a rollercoaster ride of emotions that will leave you shouting for more when the season ends. Severance has a tremendous cast as well that includes Patricia Arquette, John Turturro, and Christopher Walken, with directors Ben Stiller and Aoife McArdle combining their vision into creating arguably one of the most stylized and best looking shows of the last few years.



Roar

One thing Apple has to its advantage is the ability to bring together some of the biggest stars in the world right now and Roar is the perfect example of that. Featuring a stellar cast that includes Nicole Kidman, Alison Brie, Alfred Molina, and Merrit Weaver to name but a few, star in this insightful, poignant, and sometimes hilarious portrait of what it means to be a woman today. Featuring a unique blend of magical realism, familiar domestic and professional scenarios, and futuristic worlds, these eight stories mirror the dilemmas of ordinary women in accessible yet surprising ways. How they emerge from their respective journeys speaks to the resiliency that exists within themselves, and with all women. From the creators of the brilliant and critically lauded show GLOW, Roar is an eccentric comedy told from a female point of view, which also features ghosts, a wife returning her husband, and a woman who has a relationship with a duck. It's weird, it's wonderful and surprisingly moving. One of the sleeper hits of 2022 and a must-watch for everyone.

Slow Horses

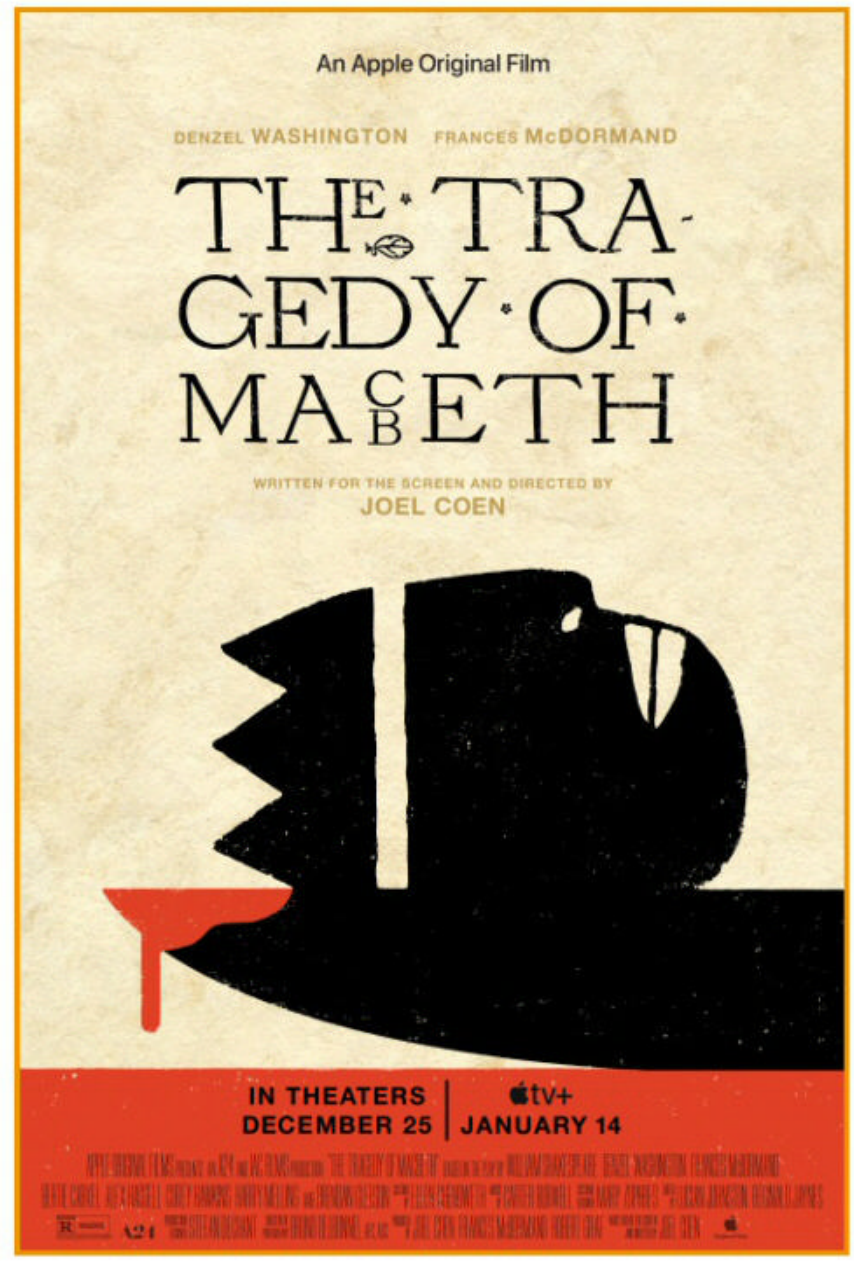
These days, spy dramas are restricted to the over-the-top action set pieces of a Mission Impossible or the high-tech action spectaculars that the Bond series has become. Yet Slow Horses brings back the gritty lo-fi nature of espionage in this darkly funny drama that sees a team of British intelligence agents who serve in a dumping ground department of MI5 due to their career-ending mistakes. Led by their brilliant but irascible leader, the notorious Jackson Lamb, they navigate the espionage world's smoke and mirrors to defend England from sinister forces. Slow Horses is wonderfully British and led by the always incredible Gary Oldman, this spy drama sets a new standard for the genre. Based on the CWA Gold Dagger Award-winning British espionage book series by Mick Herron, which sees British MI5 agent River Cartwright exiled to Slough House, an administrative purgatory for service rejects after a botched and publicly embarrassing training mission. Known as slow horses, Cartwright and his fellow employees must endure dull, paper-pushing tasks and their miserable boss, Jackson Lamb, who expects them to quit out of boredom and frustration. Life in Slough House is defined by drudgery until the slow horses become entangled in a dangerous gambit by Regent's Park.

The Afterparty

The premise for The Afterparty is simple, a bunch of classmates attend a high school reunion where tragedy strikes as one of the fellow classmates and current pop-star is murdered at his own afterparty. This clever and very funny whodunnit series sees each of the eight episodes feature a retelling of the same night told through a different character's perspective, each with its own unique visual style and film genre to match the teller's personality. Think Knives Out but just way more hilarious as it stars some of the brightest and most talented comedic stars in the business today, from Tiffany Haddish to Ben Schwartzman. The Afterparty finds a way to make the tired murder mystery plot into an exciting and fresh new take, especially with the unique way they filmed each episode to give each "suspect" a unique voice and look as they recount their story and plead their innocence. Even though the comedy might be over the top and surreal at times, the murder mystery itself is compelling and will keep you guessing right up until the last minute of the series.

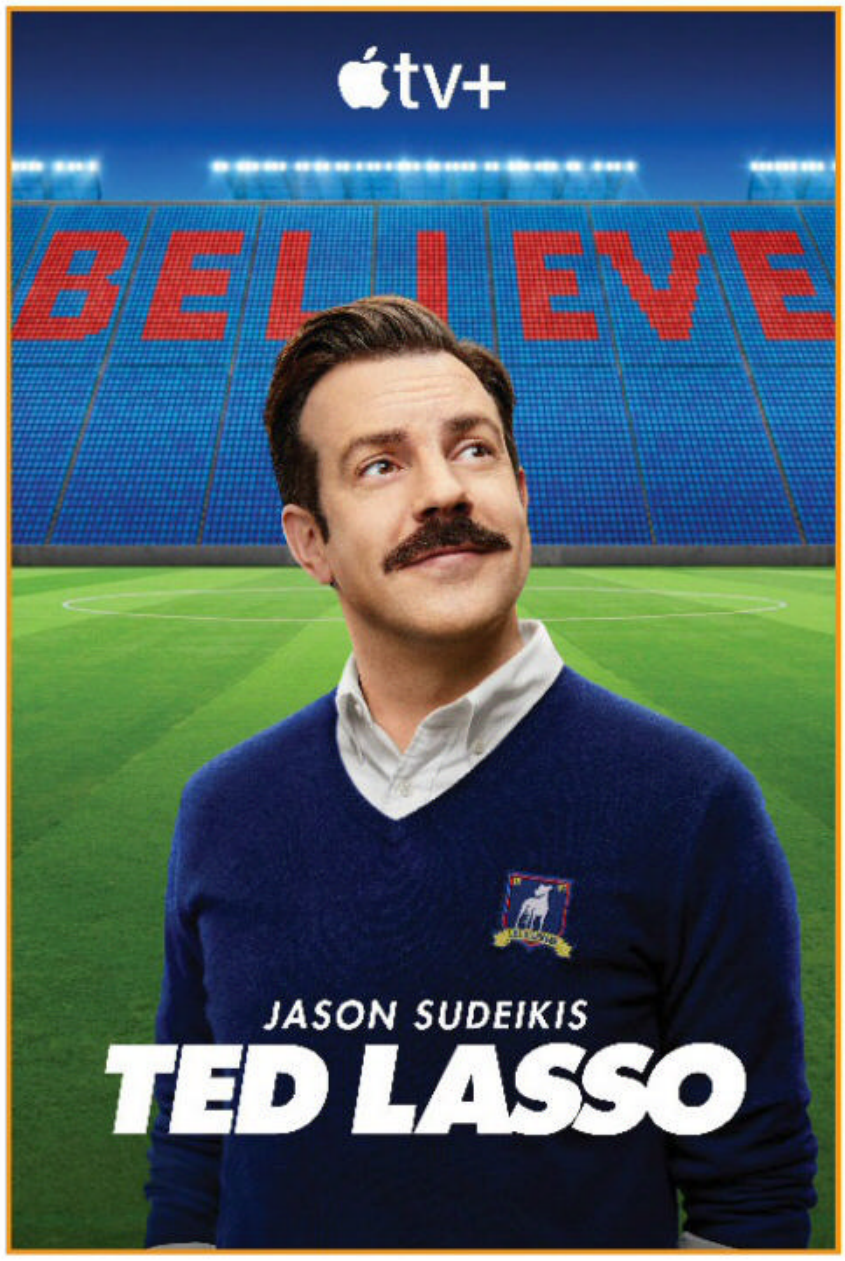
The Tragedy of Macbeth

Shakespeare adaptations are few and far between these days, but trust one-half of the famous Coen brothers to bring the age-old story of Macbeth to life in this fascinating and visually stunning rendition. Starring the incredibly talented Denzel Washington as the troubled Lord Macbeth, this black and white art film captures everything that made the tale of Macbeth so relatable. Francis McDormand turns in a stunning rendition of Lady Macbeth and alongside Washington delivers some of the most remarkable performances seen in a very long time. The story itself remains true to the original works of Shakespeare as Macbeth, a Scottish lord becomes convinced by a trio of witches that he will become the next King of Scotland, and his ambitious wife supports him in his plans of seizing power. What follows is a descent into madness, tyranny and eventually, loss, and this new rendition perfectly capture the madness and downfall of Macbeth. If you happened to miss this wonderful movie in the theater, then Apple TV+ is the perfect place to catch up on this masterful movie.



Dr. Brain

Korean cinema and tv shows have exploded onto the Western scene in recent years, showing off the unique vision and storytelling of some of Korea's most talented directors, actors and writers. Apple TV+'s first foray into the Korean visual landscape comes in the weird and wonderful science fiction series about brains. Dr. Brain follows a brilliant brain scientist Sewon who suffers a horrific personal tragedy when his family falls victim to a mysterious accident. Desperate to uncover what happened, he goes to extraordinary lengths to solve the tragic mystery by conducting "brain syncs" with the dead to access their memories for clues. These brain syncs play out as dream sequences and are some of the most astounding and visually impressive sequences on television right now. Of course, messing with the natural order has its consequences and what follows is sometimes truly frightening and rather upsetting. If you're a fan of Korean dramas and the strange sci-fi takes that come with them, then Dr. Brain is a must-watch.



Ted Lasso

It's no secret why Ted Lasso has been cleaning up at every single award show over the last few years, it's hilariously brilliant. The wonderful Jason Sudeikis stars as American Ted Lasso, a college football coach, who is unexpectedly recruited to coach an English Premier League team, AFC Richmond, despite having no experience coaching soccer. The team's owner, Rebecca Welton, hires Lasso hoping he would fail, as a means of exacting revenge on the previous owner, her unfaithful ex-husband. However, Ted's charm, personality, and humor begin to win over Rebecca, the team, and those who had been skeptical about his appointment. Although on paper the story might sound contrived and overplayed, Ted's seemingly unshakeable good nature and determination to see the best in everyone, even those actively trying to do him harm, is downright inspiring. He doesn't just bring a glow to everyone around him; he leaves viewers with the hope that things can get better and that doing your best is enough. Ted Lasso might not be the most original story out there, but considering how depressing the last few years have been, having some hope and positivity shining through one's TV screen is much needed, and Ted is happy to oblige.

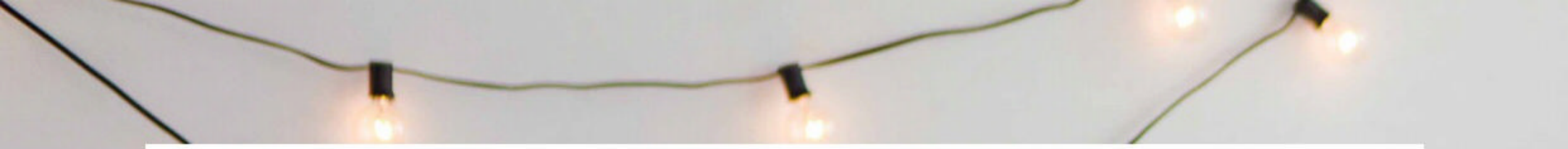
Pachinko

One of the newest series to be streamed on the famous Apple brand's streaming service and perhaps one of its best is Pachinko, a wonderful Korean drama that sees its multi-generational characters navigating the loss of their national and cultural identity amid the effects of Japanese colonialism in the early 20th century. Adapted by Soo Hugh from Min Jin Lee's novel of the same name and directed by Kogonada and Justin Chon, the limited series is an artfully staged and detailed historical epic that alternates between three time periods, juxtaposing the present with poignant memories of one family's experiences across generations. The story balances the perspectives of an aging Sunja, whose memories of her youth in colonial Korea and Osaka are awakened following the arrival of her grandson, Solomon from America. Solomon's return to Osaka for a business trip leads to a cross-generational examination of family as Sunja struggles with her desire and fear of visiting Korea and Solomon comes to terms with the weight of his family history. It's an incredible series with fantastic writing, acting, and a visual style that will stick with you for years to come. Plus Pachinko might have one of the best opening credit intros ever created thanks to possibly the best intro music to a show ever.

Amy Taylor

Instagram @amytaylorla

Photographer Julia Mindar | @JuliaMindarPhoto
Wardrobe @DanielAlamillo_
HMUA @MUATonyYanez
Location @ZevarraLofts
PR LSA Publications @leo.alderman @lsapublications



Such an absolute honour to have you on FHM! How has the year been for you? I'm hopeful that 2022 will be a great year. I had a wonderful 2021, personally, despite the absolute nonsense going on all over the world. For sure, there will continue to be a lot of that difficulty next year, but I cautiously say things are going slightly better in many areas, and I hope that they continue to do so. I have a few projects on the horizon and a heap of travel (as I did last year); therefore, I'm looking forward to the year. Sky's the limit if you turn off the news, get outside and enjoy whatever you can, flexibly if you have to, I've found. I plan to do just that in 2022. I refuse to let change or fear stop me from aiming for happiness; I hope that whatever you dealt with in 2021, that you're feeling the same way about 2022.

What are you most looking forward to this year? Being on the covers of 3 major magazines, and showing you guys the awesome photo and video shoots we did to produce the content in those issues. Traveling to several countries to which I've never been. Doing more skiing, SCUBA diving, seeing friends and family, trying to stay healthy and happy, and most of all, more quality snuggle time with the main guy in my life, my 6-pound dog.

Top 3 best moments of your career so far?
1. Being on the cover of FHM in the USA
2. Being featured in Sports Illustrated
3. Being well over 40 and having a healthier modeling career than ever.

What was on your resolution list? I don't make New Year's Resolutions, but I do have some goals...I'd like to finish my Ph.D. or DBA (always said I would but have only finished my MBA so far, really have no reason to except for personal desire and a love of learning, and not sure I'll get around to it), get my acrobatic rating, and see Antarctica (aiming for winter 2022-2023).

When it comes to goals and ambition, what are some of the things that keep you focused on getting there, what is the driving force behind it all? The brief, beautiful nature of life. There's no time to waste! If I want a full life, which of course I do, I have to do the things that make it interesting. Being lazy doesn't really make for an interesting trip around and around the sun, now does it? Not that rest isn't vital, of course, but as they say, one can rest when one's dead. I definitely don't maniacally over- drive, but I do work pretty hard to achieve my financial, career, and avocation goals. None of the really good stuff in life is ever possible without planning, direction and effort.

What are some of your favourite outdoor activities? Marksmanship, aviation, SCUBA, skiing, golf, tennis, polo, surfing, paddleboarding, boating, and whenever yoga's outdoor!

3 ultimate deal breakers when it comes to men? Sloth, cruelty, and mercuriality. Be lazy, be mean, and/or be kooky, and I'm gone.

Never have I ever.. Had sex with two men at the same time. Yet.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? That we're stupid, that we all have eating disorders, and that we all necessarily like all that makeup and primping on our off days.

What is the best way to approach you as an admirer? Have a private jet. OK, just teasing. Barring that, be interesting. Have hobbies, friends, goals, stories, a life I'd want to be part of. Bring something to the table...my life is already great. Why should I add you to it? Be a reason I'd want to do so.

FHM

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? Instagram or YouTube: @AmyTaylorLA
TikTok: @AmyTaylorCA
Twitter: @AmyTaylor1
Facebook: @AmyTaylorInLA

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? Get off that little lighted square and get outside...real life's waiting. Oh, and I love y'all. xoxo

KING OF THE CARNI-VAL

KIA's new MPV is the juggler on a tight rope

The MPV, or people carrier segment, has witnessed something of an unexpected regrowth in recent months with models like the Hyundai Staria and Opel Zafira and this KIA Carnival all trying to inject a dosage of chicness back into the segment that has always been a reflection of one's multiplying stages in life.

The type of decision that goes head-to-head with the 7-seater SUV that inevitably gets criticized for compromised three-row comfort,

yet almost always edges out the MPV based largely on a style-conscious image.

This is not KIA's first attempt at an MPV. The previous Grand Sedona was one of our favorites in terms of luxury travel and the new Carnival has expanded on that formula through a number of digital refinements and upgraded materials.

Behind the sliding doors

Electronically operated, an underlying theme here, and with buttons on the key fob to cut down on waiting time, is a 7-seater cabin that during my time quickly started to resemble elements of a bedroom, sports locker room, and office setup.

Kids can stand up straight and walk between the second row of individual seats which are arguably the most sought-after and well-equipped thanks to a reclining function and have the added benefit of sliding forward or backward, although don't swivel into a conference' mode like in a Vito or Caravelle. This strictly forward-facing layout might also explain why the KIA Carnival doesn't have any tables.

With this type of vehicle, it's all about placing passengers in their own little zones where they don't need to share plug pints or compromise their comfort. The Carnival achieves this thanks to its own climate panel, cup holders, and USB ports.

We're also impressed that the premium materials, piano black finishes, contrasting black and white surfaces and warm lighting effects aren't only reserved for the front row. Each of the seats, for instance, are sculpted and supportive too. If you want more space,

the seats can be removed to yield a bigger volume area than you'd find in a KIA Sorento.

Nominated Bus Driver

There's a high probability that time at the wheel of the Carnival will be done without any passengers for company so digging up any driving enjoyment from a body that is over five meters and weighs nearly three tonnes is a challenge that fortunately wasn't completely ignored by KIA's chassis folk. That said, its handling still lacks the directness of a SUV, although thanks to light steering and good visibility, we never struggled to thread it around town. You also don't sit quite as much on top of the front axle as with other MPVs and the overhangs and car-lie seat position create an environment of familiarity.

No hybrid, but diesel comes close

The 2.2-liter engine is currently the largest engine you'll find behind KIA's updated grille and it drives the front wheels through a 7-speed auto transmission with no other drivetrain options available. It's a fairly last-generation mill that despite the many driving modes, and sporty gear shift paddles, won't have you chasing the redline. In fact, one barely takes any notice of the dials linked to any aspect of speed or engine behavior. Just know that it provides pickup-rivaling performance and uses less fuel too.

Autopilot engaged

Typical KIA switchgear and layouts would disappear inside the Carnival's cockpit so designers clearly spent money creating bespoke panels and displays that house the largest amount of gadgets and systems in any KIA thus far. It really does utilize the space effectively, yet won't have you stretching while the combination and variety of switches are mostly right, and everything is clearly labeled. Buttons are also nicely angled which helps with accuracy.

The 12-inch screen supports the usual smartphone integration but rather disappointingly will only give you the full experience and access when it's connected via a USB cable, rather than wirelessly. A real joy in winter were the heated seats (and by contrast, summer will see the cooled seats in action) while autonomous driving systems are at the cutting edge and provide long stints of hands-off driving with smooth corrections and gentle braking forces applied to keep the big KIA in its lane. Big vehicles like this rely on technology like blind-spot monitoring and wonderfully vibrant camera feeds front and rear with an aerial view mode too.

Final words

If you've read this far, you're probably already considering an MPV – good for you! We tried hard to fault the Carnival but came up empty-handed and while perhaps the Hyundai Staria might just edge it in looks, we prefer the Carnival's interior design, especially the materials and recessed buttons for a cleaner look. Considering the many distractions and impatient requests that might arise from passengers in the rear seats, the autonomous driving modes are also some of the best, and most necessary.

There was a time when the Mercedes Vito was the undisputed champion of luxury travel but after driving the KIA Carnival, there might be an new heir to the MPV throne.

Pawan Dhingara

THE JUNIOR GT-R HAS ARRIVED

Nissan's Z-legacy carries on, and this one is for the fans

There will soon be another, more modern way of enjoying a slice of Nissan's Japanese sportscar heritage in the shape and form of the new Nissan Z – the proverbial understudy to the Nissan GT-R that is starting to show its age and has no confirmed successor at this stage. That means the Nissan Z has to carry the hopes and prayers of Nissan sportscar enthusiasts who will no doubt be using Toyota's Supra as some form of reference point and benchmark. Yes, the Supra vs Nissan Z battle is about to resume in the 21st century and it's looking to be as close as ever. Nissan seems to have a clear understanding of what made Nissan Z cars great and how to take them into the future; they've modernized the powertrain but kept its fundamental layout the same. They've made it quicker but kept the driver at the center of everything. It's a mouth-watering convergence of ideas and philosophies.

Although the move away from a normally aspirated engine to a lighter turbocharged engine might feel like a betrayal to some fans, that shouldn't last long; healthy power increases justify the decision with the 3.0-liter straight-six producing 400 horsepower and 350 lb-ft, all going to the rear-wheels and probably making one of the most perfect drift cars right out the box. And while a turbo-charged engine back in the 90s would have probably suffered from lots of turbo lag, the new Z employs technologies that keep the turbos spinning near their peak during off-throttle moments, which makes it behave and respond like a

normally aspirated engine.

Gearbox choices add even more flavor to the car thanks to a six-speed manual as an alternative to the nine-speed auto – one more than you'll find on a Supra. Acceleration times might make the auto the favorite – it comes with launch control - and more popular, but we'll applaud Nissan for giving buyers the option, even if demand will be low.
The 370's shape has aged into something of a classic but there are areas where it looks a bit flabby and untoned. That's been firmed up in the Nissan Z – there's more aggression and sharper lines and an overall tautness that its predecessor lacked. Yet clearly the engineers at Nissan have a lot of respect for the Nissan 370Z and saw a lot of unused potential that could still be unlocked. Keeping the 370's chassis as the foundation, they began tweaking the existing mounting points and tested various damper designs that would complement the new tire sizes. The result is a car that isn't as polarizing as before; packs more finesse when the road isn't perfect and is less punishing on your body when all you want to do is go to the shops. It's mature but still, a scalpel compared to the heavyweight GT-R which by comparison requires more road to use all its explosive power.

The two-seater cockpit is again inspired by previous Z models with dimensions that make the driver feel a big part of the car, and leaves out anything that isn't going to add value to the experience. It's a less-is-more approach but one that still includes higher quality materials and better ergonomics.
Connectivity is a quick way of making a car feel massively newer and the touchscreen helps the Nissan Z be a sportscar that you can live with daily. It's probably the smartest cabin of any Nissan currently on sale whereas the new Supra entered this world with a heavy BMW tag hanging over its head, the Nissan Z is free from such a burden. This is a pure-bred Nissan that sportscar fans should have no problem accepting and after years of silence they'll now have something to sing and cheer about.
Pawan Dhingara

LIGHT AND LOOKING FOR A FIGHT

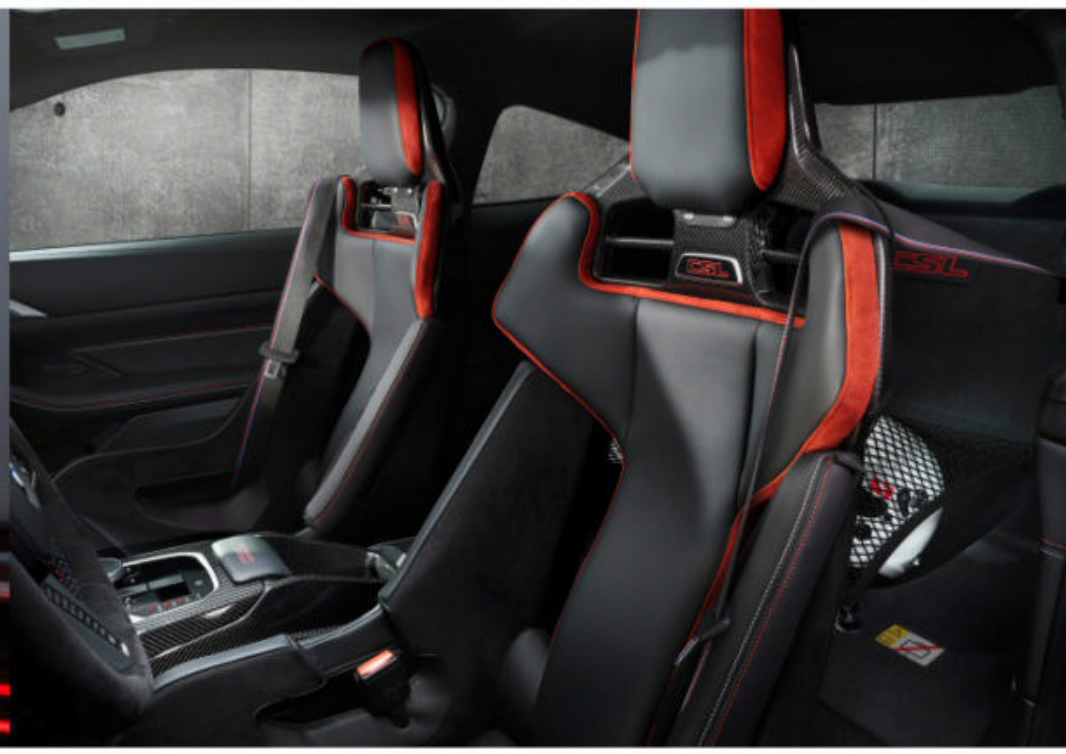
BMW's M4 CSL sets a new Nurburgring record for the brand

This is the car that's currently sending the internet into a sideways slide. Nope, not a Bugatti or Koenigsegg, but rather a BMW M4 wearing some different paint and packing an uprated version of its turbocharged six-cylinder engine.

BMW has revived its CSL (competition sport lightweight) concept for the latest M4 and anticipation is boiling over. This comes from the fact that the CSL nomenclature has only adorned two BMWs before in the last five decades, and those cars have gone on to become highly sought-after and solid investments.

As to where this new package fits in the grand scheme of things, according to those who worked on the project, the M4 CSL is a closer comparison to the M4 GT3 race car than to the M4 Competition. At first, that sounds like the old cliched 'race car for the road' analogy but this car has already gone around the Nurburgring in 7 minutes, 20 seconds, earning it the title of fastest production BMW ever.

It's no secret that BMW's S58 has a lot of hidden potential which we're now starting to see but even so a lot of work has gone into reaching these higher numbers. Engineers have stripped the powerplant apart, adding in a lightweight crankshaft, a new cylinder head, and more boost pressure from the two turbos. A special coasting inside the engine also enables better thermal control and efficiency but lap times don't just come from an engine – the Nurburgring has 154 corners so it still



remains the ultimate test for a car's chassis, aero balance, and traction.

New engine mounts in the M4 CSL start adding to the chassis' stiffness with bespoke dampers and springs helping to lower the car another 8mm. Both axles have also received some other refinements which have wandered their way down the pitlane from the GT3 race car. These parts aren't only stiffer, they're lighter too, and when all the carbon fiber is fitted around the car's nose and down the flanks.

So we've determined that the M4 CS: will be faster and stiffer, but looks are another area where the CSL must differentiate itself from the Competition models.

Purists will be happy to see that the ducktail spoiler is back (think 911 Carrera RS models too) while those front grilles are nestled inside a more sculpted body kit. It all looks fiercely good. Three choices of paintwork are available although for the time being BMW has only revealed the Brooklyn Grey with red accents. The other confirmed colors are Alpine White or Sapphire Black, both most likely retaining the red striping.

Where the M4 CSL retains some of its road bias is in the interior which hasn't been stripped bare. It includes the same features and items of the M4 Competition, albeit with a center console made from carbon fiber.

Like the M4 GTS, the rear seats aren't part of the package while the ones up front look like they'll leave a few bruises and give you a good pinch as you wedge yourself into them.
With many fans wondering if this will be the last M4 without hybrid assistance, plus the rarity of the CSL badge, this is a future classic in the making. Production will end after 1000 models have been built and markets will be fighting it out to get their hands on as many as possible this year, or early 2023.
Pawan Dhingara

Made to Order!

There are few things better in life than feasting on a delicious dish. Be it thick and greasy, or healthy yet meaty. Actually, it doesn't need to be either greasy or meaty because there's plenty of vegetarian dishes that come in a variety of choices and flavors. This month we decide to put something 'EXTRA delish' together so prep the kitchen, and let's get cooking!

STUFFED SWEET POTATOES

Here's another great vegetarian-inspired meal that's great for snacking on, or even to serve as a starter. You can't go wrong with potatoes and the sweet ones are always the healthier choice so be sure to enjoy - guilt-free!

Prep time: *5min*
Cooking time: *1h15min*
Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 4 medium to large sweet potatoes (baked in the oven for 1h15min on 395F / 200C
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large red onion diced or 9 to 10 sprigs of small salad onions diced
- 2 cans of chickpeas drained, washed and patted dry
- 4 tbsp raw honey
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 oz (50g) of pumpkin seeds
- 4 oz (100g) of wilted baby spinach drained properly and cut into small pieces with kitchen scissors
- sprinkle with almond flour and red chili flakes
- Garnish with fresh thyme

Instructions

Preheat oven to 395F (200C).

Rinse sweet potatoes and place on a baking tray prepared with a nonstick spray.

Bake for 1h15min.

Remove and allow to cool off slightly.

In the meantime, prepare the chickpeas for the filling.

Start by frying the diced onion in the olive oil till almost brown, add the chickpeas and cook for about 5 minutes.

Add the honey, salt, pepper, cumin, paprika and pumpkin seeds and keep stir-frying till the honey has caramelized.

Wilt the spinach in hot water and drain very well, cut into pieces with kitchen scissors and add to the chickpeas.

Remove from the heat and set aside to cool off slightly.

Cut open the sweet potato and fill with chickpeas.

Garnish with a sprinkle of almond flour and some chili flakes

Serve warm and enjoy!

CREAMY TOMATO AND GARLIC PASTA SALAD

Here's a tasty starter or a quick snack that's perfect if you're on the go. It's dairy-free and suitable for vegetarians, vegans or the regular omnivore.

Prep time: *5min*
Cooking time: *10min*
Servings: *5-6*

Ingredients

- 18 oz (500g) of pasta pre-cooked (we prefer rice pasta for anti-inflammatory purposes, alternatively gluten-free is also good)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium red salad onion diced
- 14 oz (400g) rosa tomatoes cut in half
- 2 tsp garlic flakes
- 2 tsp onion flakes
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 2 tsp desert salt
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 3 tbsp of honey
- 1 heaped tbsp paprika
- 2 tsp sweet basil
- 9 fl.oz (250ml) of Almond Breeze unsweetened almond milk
- 4 oz (100g) chopped sundried tomatoes
- 1 handful of freshly chopped basil
- 2 heaped tbsp almond flour

Instructions

Pre-cook the pasta, rinse and allow to cool off.

Preheat a pan with olive oil and fry onions till brown, add the rosa tomatoes and stir-fry till soft.

Add all the ingredients and stir well.

Add the almond milk last, reduce the temperature and allow the sauce to simmer for a few minutes.

Allow to cool.

Pour over the pasta and mix well.

Add the chopped sundried tomatoes and sprinkle with almond flour.

Refrigerate till properly cooled off.

Add fresh basil before serving.

STICKY BBQ CHICKEN WINGS

We love these for get-togethers with friends or for the next big sports game. You can't go wrong with sticky wings so we're sure you're going to love these as much as we do - if not more!

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *25-30min*
Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 8 chicken wings

For the sauce

- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 6 tbsp raw honey
- 2 tbsp water
- 3 tsp salt
- 1 heaped tbsp sweet or smoky paprika
- 1 tbsp dried parsley
- 1 tbsp almond flour
- Fresh thyme and lemon wedges for garnish

Instructions

Preheat oven to 395F (200C).

Prepare a baking tray with foil and nonstick spray.

Mix the basting sauce in a large mixing bowl.

Dip the chicken wings one-for-one in the sauce using your hands to make sure the whole wing is covered properly before placing each in the baking tray.

Sprinkle with almond flour.

Place in the oven for 20 minutes, remove, baste each wing with leftover basting sauce, switch oven to grill on high level and place back in the oven for another 5 minutes.

Serve warm or cold.

ANTIPASTI-STYLE HAKE

Tired of chicken or beef? Then you'll love this delicious yet unique fish dish. This is more of a dinner-time staple and it's best shared with that significant other over a bottle of white wine or sparkling water - with a wedge of lemon.

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *30min*
Servings: *4*

Ingredients

- 1 box of frozen hake fillets (28 oz / 800g)
- a drizzle of olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 4 oz (100g) baby corn cut into chunks
- 4 sweet and sour gherkins cut into thin strips
- 1 oz (20g) almond flour
- 1/2 tsp harissa spice
- 1 oz (30g) sundried tomato
- 1/3 white onion diced in fine small pieces
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp sweet basil or oregano

Instructions

Preheat oven to 395F (200C).

Prepare the oven tray with nonstick spray.

Place frozen hake fillets on the oven tray and put it in the oven.

Remove from the oven after 10 minutes and arrange the baby corn on the baking tray.

Season fish with salt, paprika, almond flour, harissa spice and diced onion.

Arrange the gherkins and sundried tomato on every fillet.

Arrange the vine tomatoes on the baking tray for garnish.

Drizzle with honey and balsamic vinegar.

Finish off with sweet basil and place back in the oven for another 20 minutes.

Garnish with olives before serving.

EGGPLANT BAKE

Now, this is definitely a unique dish you've simply got to treat your tastebuds to!
It's the perfect dinner if you're hosting vegetarian guests or if you're just looking to incorporate some variety and flavor within your daily meal preps.

Prep time: *10min*
Cooking time: *40min*
(when baked for 20 minutes at 395F / 200C)
Servings: *4-6*

Ingredients

- 35 oz (1kg) butternut steamed in the microwave for 12 minutes

For the sauce / topping

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 red salad onion diced
- 21 oz (600g) rosa tomatoes cut in halves
- 1 eggplant (aubergine) diced (+- 10 oz / 300g)
- 2 tsp garlic flakes
- 1 heaped tbsp paprika
- 3 tbsp raw honey
- 3 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 tsp sweet basil
- 50g almond flour
- 2 tbsp sesame seeds
- olive oil
- salt
- fresh basil

Instructions

Preheat oven to 395F (200C)

In a frying pan, fry the onion and eggplant (aubergine) in olive oil till brown, add the tomato and allow to cook till soft.

Add the garlic, paprika, honey, salt and pepper, and sweet basil.

Allow to simmer for a few minutes, till the honey starts to caramelize.

In the meantime, prepare a baking dish with nonstick spray and arrange the steamed butternut chunks in the dish.

Pour the tomato mix over.

Sprinkle with almond flour and sesame seeds, and finish off with salt and a drizzle of olive oil.

Bake for 20 minutes and serve warm with quinoa or basmati rice.

OH YES!

BRI SANDS

Model | @brisandslv

Photographer Roxy Ryann | @roxyryannphotos
MUA Kelsi with Beauty Studio Inc. | @beautystudioinc
Hair Ashley with Beauty Studio Inc. | @beautystudioinc
PR LA Media Group | @la.mediagroup

BELLAGIO
WE'RE GETTING A
NEW LOOK
SO YOU CAN TOO

Such an absolute honor to have you on FHM! How is the year going for you? I feel very optimistic and excited about this year.

What are you most looking forward to this year? I am looking forward to traveling more now that the world has opened up. In fact, I'm very excited about going to Greece this summer.

Top 3 best moments of your career so far? As an atmosphere model, I've had the opportunity to meet so many fantastic and interesting people and have traveled to a variety of worldwide exciting places. This field has also allowed me the freedom to grow and further my education.

What was on your resolution list? Resolutions I've stuck with include living a healthier lifestyle, running distance races, and meeting one of my celebrity crushes.

When it comes to goals and ambition, what are some of the things that keep you focused on getting there, what is the driving force behind it all? I want to continue to grow and learn. There are so many fantastic opportunities life has to offer.

What are some of your favorite outdoor activities? I enjoy running, hiking, and swimming.

3 ultimate deal-breakers when it comes to men? A man who's unsure of himself, rudeness, and a man who doesn't have my back.

Never have I ever... skydived.

Top 3 myth busters when it comes to models? Models cannot eat whatever they want. Some people think our personalities do not match our looks and you do not have to be over 6 ft tall to be a model.

What is the best way to approach you as an admirer? I like to be approached with a smile.

Where can our readers catch up with you and stay updated with your work? The best way is to follow me on social media @BriLV on Twitter and @brisandslv on Instagram.

We are so happy to have gotten to know you a little bit! Any last words out there for our readers? "Life is too short, or too long, for me to allow myself the luxury of living it so badly." Paulo Coelho

DARKFEST 2022 OFFICIAL HIGHLIGHTS

STRAP IN FOR HIGH VIBES AND BIG AIR

Images courtesy of **Monster Energy**

Stellenbosch, SA –25 April 2022 Darkfest has released a highlights video to contend with the greatest event edits of all time. Imma let you finish, but first, please strap your head into a full face and conduct the necessary safety checks before dropping into it.

We're proud to present the DarkFEST 2022 Official Highlights. Not only did Sam Reynolds & the crew open up the biggest freeride jumps on the planet to a new generation of riders to push the boundaries in 2022, but for the first time also including a full legendary line up of women who absolutely slayed it! Sit back, 'crack a monny' & absorb 17 minutes of pure freeride bliss with all the bangers & slams in their entirety! Go check it out on the official Monster Energy YouTube channel.

Featured Riders: Sam Reynolds, Clemens Kaudela, Adolf Silva, Ike Klaassen, Theo Erlangsen, Sam Hodgson, Ethan Nell, Cam Zink, Kade Edwards, Kaos Seagrave, Bienvenido Aguado, Nicholi Rogatkin, Szymon Godziek, Brendan Fairclough, Daniel Ruso, Elias Ruso, Tom Isted, Vincent Tupin, Reed Boggs, Matt MacDuff, Daryl Brown, Andrew Neethling, Jack Schliemann, Vero Sandler, Casey Brown, Hannah Bergemann, Chelsea Kimball & Robin Goomes.

"I thought it couldn't get any better, but each year I'm blown away. Cheers to the crew, the riders, the whole Darkfest family who keep making this thing happen. Literally the best part of my year." - Sam Reynolds, Host and Creator of Darkfest

One of the largest gatherings of Freeride legends, newbies and ladies, it's been a minute since we've been able to say that the vibes were absolutely firing since day zero. As soon as the course was opened up by Spanish wildman and King of Darkfest '22, Bienvenido Aguado, it was ON. We saw history-making 90-foot jumps by Robin Goomes and Casey Brown, redemption Double Flips by Adolf Silva and the steeziest whips by World Cup DH hero Kaos Seagrave.

DARKFEST PRIZE WINNERS

King & Queen of Darkfest
@bienvenidoaguado
@chelseasendsit

@kendatireseurope Best Trick
@adolfsilva
@veroniquesandler

@spankbikes Best Whip
@kaosseagrave
@veroniquesandler

@ns_bikesco Stay True award
@tom_isted
@casey__brown__

@fiveten_official moment award
@samhodgs0n

Vision moment
@robin_riding_hood

Darkfest is designed and run by the riders for the riders, highlighting the world's best Freeriders digging and hitting the biggest jumps possible on a bike. The prizes are rider-voted and are given to the winners following a week of jam-format riding.

FRANCK MULLER
GENEVE

ECJ LUXE
COLLECTION

4521 Sharon Rd. Suite 101 Charlotte, NC 28211
ChrisW@DiamondsDirect.com (704) 295-9190